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"Nature's Retreat for Weary Bodies and Tired Brains:"

SCENIC BYWAY DESIGNATION AS A PRESERVATION TOOL FOR TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

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A THESIS

in

Historic Preservation

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

1994

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When I journey down U.S. Route One into Topsfield, Massachusetts the sense of coming home is very strong. It is not only going home to the house where I grew up, but to a landscape full of history and beauty in which my emotions are deeply rooted. These ties to the landscape and pride in family heritage began with my grandparents. My grandmothers, Elsa Russell Brown and Elizabeth Featherstone Duffill, have put up with my incessant prodding and shared with me their knowledge of local history and captivating remembrances of family. My grandfather, Raymond Alden Duffill, a farmer, has instilled in me a respect for and admiration of our agricultural heritage.

I am particularly appreciative of the counsel of Professors Christa Wilmanns-Wells and John C. Keene of the University of Pennsylvania. Through the aid of their scholarly expertise I have begun to discover the methods that allow me to document and protect historic landscapes. With their helpful critique, kindness, and enthusiasm, I have been able to articulate that a road is not just a vehicle for travel, to get from Point A to Point B, but that it can be an experience, an education and a delight.

■ INTRODUCTION ■

There is something about experiencing the landscape by car that responds to an American idea of freedom. Depending on the road and the concentration of the driver various images of the America's past, present and future are revealed. They are seen as public spaces, but with different meanings for different users. Historian Phil Patton wrote: "Roads are social models at least as much as buildings or parks, a sketch of how we deal with human freedom and interaction, human ability and inability. They reflect unconscious as well as conscious patterns of politics, economics, and culture. They are systematic and spontaneous, national and local, collective and individual."[1]

There are many reasons why we choose to drive on specific roads, but this paper is not an attempt to figure out American driving motives and mentality. By employing a case study of Topsfield, Massachusetts, the paper hopes to make people aware of the actual elements that make up a driving experience; to help define the meaning of a road and its elements to a community; and to outline a program to protect those elements and ideals the road represents.

Most Americans are familiar with U.S. Highway One. Many even recognize it as the oldest highway in America, stretching from Canada to the Florida Keys. But do they necessarily connect the road to their community's character? North of Boston, Route One is the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike. Topsfield, at mile 17.3, is approximately halfway between Boston and Newburyport. Locally known as Boston Street or by longtime residents just as the "Pike," it was also named as the 'airline route' because of its

[1] Phil Patton, *Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 13 and 16.

unwavering course; running in a straight line for 36.5 miles deviating only 83 feet.[2] A 1917 travel guide describes its path "across country, up hill and down, through some charming rural scenery, avoiding all the industrial centers of the larger towns" traversing "a hilly region in the town of Topsfield...[which]... has recently been taken up by large residential estates."[3] Another travel guide from 1938 describes it as [running] through pleasant farm land...then over the glacial hills...and... traverses the wooded and farming sections of Northern Essex County."[4]

For Topsfield residents, the town's identity is embodied in these landscapes and buildings viewed and accessed from Route One. Jan Janssen and his wife moved to Topsfield in the 1940's from New Jersey because "the beautiful approach by Route One" gave them a sense of a real New England town.[5] The road's siting on the town's rolling hills gives views over pastures to the Congregational Church steeple, old farm houses, pastures, the winding Ipswich River and fall foliage. It invites a drive to soak up the historical landscape.

In the following study, Chapter One outlines information on existing scenic road programs with specific emphasis on the Federal Scenic Byway Program called into action through the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). Chapter Two will further detail the Federal Program's intentions in helping communities develop real protections for their roads as well as examine potential tools for scenic road protection.

The last three chapters are about Topsfield and Route One. Information and opinions are based on the author's life-time residency and familiarity with the town and the highway, supported by historic and current documentation, and by theories learned in the

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[2]H. Folansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike." In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historic Society, Vol. XI, 1906) 4.
[3]Porter E. Sargent, *A Handbook of New England: An Annual Publication* (Boston: Geo. H. Ellis Co., 1917) 85.
[4]Federal Writer's Project of the Works Progress Administration, *U.S. One: Maine to Florida* (New York: Modern Age Book, Inc., 1938) 24.
[5]Interview with Jan Janssen, summer 1993.

Graduate Historic Preservation Program at the University of Pennsylvania. Chapter Three is a history and description of Topsfield, an attempt to define the town's past and present character, so that it may define its community's vision for the future. Chapter Four examines Route One's history with special attention to its role in Topsfield's history. Chapter Five is the start of a scenic byway protection program for Topsfield; it determines and describes Route One's resources and suggests potential protections for those resources.

Topsfield needs to think about their community and way of life as potentially threatened should there not be careful management of its resources and development. Hopefully, the town of Topsfield will view this thesis as the first step in defining the visual character of the town and what those individual resources are that make up the visual character. Arguably, when discussing the "way of life" in a community, deeper digging will reveal that it is also the "form of life" out of which the way emerges.

The paper is not only about aesthetics, but about making the citizens of Topsfield aware of their resources, encouraging their participation and providing information and the framework to protect what they value about their community. By building a coalition to study, educate and protect their resources, Topsfield will ultimately be increasing cultural and environmental value for the entire society.

■ CHAPTER ONE ■
SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAMS

The desire to build roads as 'scenic byways' may be traced to the avenues and boulevards that wound through the urban parks created and inspired by Frederick Law Olmsted in the latter half of the nineteenth century. As automobile travel increased and became available to the middle-class so did the byways, including the Bronx River Parkway (1913) and Oregon's Columbia River Gorge Drive (1913).[6] During the 1930's the National Park Service constructed the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Natchez Trace Parkway.[7] Today there are nine parkways administered by the National Park Service for use by recreational passenger car traffic.

Many road not necessarily designed with a scenic driving experience in mind have some of the best qualities of scenic byway objectives and various programs have been designed to protect them. In 1988 the U.S. Forest Service created a scenic highway program and has designated 103 scenic roads within the boundaries of national forests covering more than 5,500 miles.[8] They are protected principally through federal ownership of forests, but in some cases by scenic easements. The Bureau of Land Management has recently initiated the program Back Country Byways in government property in eleven western states. As of June 1992, 48 roads have been designated comprising nearly 2,500 miles. These roads are classified into four types, depending on

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[6]American Recreation Coalition, "Common Elements of State and National Scenic Byways Programs" (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 13.
[7]Blount, Dillon & Associates, "A Case Study of the Environmental Impact of the Blue Ridge Parkway" (Stone Mountain, GA: 1990), 27.
[8]Shelly Mastran, "The Protection of America's Scenic Byways," Information Series No. 68 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992).

the surface and general conditions of travel, but most require trucks or four-wheel drive vehicles.[9]

Existing state scenic byway programs differ widely in goals, authorization, organization, administration, road classification eligible for designation and the provisions for protection and operation. Thirty-four states and Puerto Rico have some type of scenic byway program. Sixteen states and Washington, D.C. do not have any formal designation of scenic byways.[10]

California, Oregon and Vermont have very explicit and high standards of designation relating to aesthetics, natural wonders, and historic resources.[11] The State Department of Transportation in California works with the local jurisdiction on a plan to assure road protection. Ideally, the protection plan includes zoning for a 2,000 foot corridor and addresses land use, billboard controls, planning for underground utilities, and landscaping. Ventura County protects Highway 33, a state designated scenic highway through the Scenic Highway Protection Overlay Zone, the requirements and restrictions of which are detailed in the zoning ordinance.[12] All development along the road must be approved by permit. Vermont's program was created in 1977, through Criterion 8 of Act 250 and allows for a scenic resource evaluation process by the Agency of Natural Resources to assess projects' aesthetic impacts on scenic or natural beauty of an area. It does not cover historic, rare or irreplaceable features, sites or areas unless they are considered aesthetic. The latter are considered under the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Natural Heritage Program.[13]

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[9]*Back Country Byways Information Packet.* Scenic Byway Conference Handbook.
[10]Shelly Mastran, "The Protection of America's Scenic Byways," Information Series No. 68 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992) 3.
[11]Oregon Economic Development Department, "Planning Roadside Information: Oregon Highway 30 Case Analysis" (Salem, OR: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 11.
[12]*Scenic America: Scenic Corridor Protection Devices for a Range of Scenic Environments.* Available from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
[13]Mary Ashcroft, *Designating Scenic Roads: A Vermont Field Guide* (Montpelier, VT: State Planning Office) 24..

States such as Maryland, Tennessee and Texas apply standards that relate more to tourism and ease of travel. Few states have, however acquired land beyond the right-of-way or easements for road protection. Massachusetts does not have an official state scenic byway program. Under the ISTEA legislation for the Interim Scenic Byway Program, Massachusetts is receiving money to fund two road designation processes as a model for developing a state program.[14]

Some states, whether they have state programs or not, have made attempts at recognizing the importance of roads to communities through enabling legislation for towns, cities or boroughs to designate scenic roads that are not state highways and to regulate future alterations and improvements to those roads. Paraphrasing Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 15C as amended:

> Upon recommendation or request of the planning board, conservation commission, or historical commission of any city or town, individuals may designate any road in their city or town, other than a numbered route or state highway, as a scenic road.

Conditions vary for these local designations, but include: a majority of landowners with property abutting the roadway must agree to the designation; the roadway must be free of heavy traffic and intense commercial development; and it must be at least one of the following: unpaved, bordered by mature trees or stone walls, measure no more than twenty feet wide, offer scenic views, blend naturally into the surrounding terrain, or travel near streams, ponds, or lakes.

With this enabling legislation Topsfield has designated twenty-six roads or portions of roads.[15] The designation does not affect the eligibility of a city or town to receive road construction or reconstruction aid and the protection is limited to the right of way. Paraphrasing Topsfield Bylaws, Article Thirty-Seven:

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[14]Massachusetts Highway Department, "Application for Interim Scenic Byways Program Funding." (Boston, MA, 1993).

[15]*Topsfield Bylaw Thirty Seven: Scenic Roads* in accordance with the provisions of the *General Laws, Chapter 40, Section 15C, as amended.* See Appendix A: Maps.

> After a road has been designated as a scenic road any repair, maintenance, reconstruction, or paving work done will not involve or include the cutting or removal of trees, or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls, or parts of walls, except with the prior written consent of the planning board and after a public hearing of the project.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was signed into law on December 18, 1991. It is an attempt by the federal government to move out of the interstate age and into an era of balanced investment in transportation which better reflects the social, environmental and energy goals of the nation.[16] Both ISTEA of 1991 and the Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 impose new planning requirements on metropolitan areas and states. With ISTEA, planning at the state level occurs for the first time, and introduces financial considerations which increase the likelihood that metropolitan and state plans will be fully implemented.[17] Although past funding has been available for metropolitan and state planning, ISTEA creates a framework in which planning is focused on overall mobility, environmental and community goals rather than on capital investment. Within the act are stronger provisions for state and local planning and a concern for assessing the impact of transportation system projects on a community and integrating transportation with other community goals. The act includes not only roads, but also public transit, car pool facilities, commuter rail and bike ways.

The act authorizes $151 billion over six years for the construction and maintenance of highways, bridges, and mass transportation facilities and transportation enhancements which include:

1. Billboard reform
   This is a reform of the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 and apportions funds for billboard removal and prohibits new billboard construction along designated scenic byways on the federal aid system and state designated scenic byways.

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[16]Shelly Mastran, "The Protection of America's Scenic Byways," Information Series No. 68 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1992) 6.

[17]*1993 National Scenic Byway Conference Handbook*, American Recreation Coalition, Washington, D.C., 1993.

2. Control and removal of outdoor advertising.
3. Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic and historic sites.
4. Landscaping and other scenic beautification projects.
5. Historic preservation, rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures and facilities including historic railroad facilities and canals.
6. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities: preservation of abandoned railway corridors including the conservation use for pedestrian and bicycle trails.
7. Tourist Oriented Directional Signs Study (TODS)
   TODS will be used as alternatives to billboards.
8. Scenic and Historic Design Standards
   Highway projects using federal transportation dollars will be responsive to preserving historic and scenic values. Projects located in historic or scenic areas must be designed to standards "that allow for the preservation of such historic or scenic value."
9. Scenic Byways Program
   The program provides $80 million in six years to states for planning, design and development of a National Scenic Byways Program.

Because America's transportation policy has a tremendous impact on the scenic quality of the American landscape, ISTEA, under Section 1047, created the foundations for the Federal Scenic Byway Program. The goals of the program are broad: to protect scenic quality, conserve the environment, enhance rural community character, promote tourism, foster economic development and give equal access to all modes of transportation. ISTEA established a 17-member Scenic Byways Advisory Committee to assist the Secretary of Transportation in creating a national scenic byways program. Members include six members from the federal government, three members representing travel and tourism, two members representing transportation officials, two members representing truck and auto users and four members of the preservation and conservation community.[18]

The advisory committee will lay out the criteria for designation, incorporate operation and management standards and include strategies for protecting and enhancing the landscape and view corridors by October 1994. There will be a two-tiered system of designation: a system of designated roads which meet national criteria, and a system of five-star byways, the all-American roads. The Federal Highway Board, in partnership

[18]Scenic America, "Transportation Design Standards for Livable Communities" (Washington, D.C., 1993) 1.

with Scenic America, is developing a guidebook to accompany the official process and the National Trust for Historic Preservation is creating a guidebook for the use on a local level. A Scenic Byway Conference was held December 6 and 7, 1993 in Washington, D.C.

The desire of the Federal Scenic Byway Program is twofold: 1) to protect America's resources along scenic roads and 2) to provide an opportunity for communities to come together to protect those resources. The latter is "Coalition Building."[19] It is the establishment of a strong base of support and commitment, vital to the survival of the byway project, by bringing together all potential stakeholders and human resource groups. Stakeholders include: private landowners, the business community, the tourism community, local government, conservationists, preservationists, planners, historians, naturalists, etc. Include all concerned parties, especially disparate groups. Each of these groups will have particular resources they feel are important and each will have information they can bring to the project.

At a grass roots level it makes more sense to approach important places holistically than for each group to attempt protection on their own. Planners can determine growth trends and housing and infrastructure needs which will help officials determine when development is necessary. In such a coalition, preservationists will realize that the built environment is linked to the forces of nature and conservationists will recognize that man is part of nature and, at his best, can complement, even enhance, the natural environment.[20] Information from planners and town officials will be combined with those of the conservationists and preservationists to determine where appropriate growth can take place.

Coalition building is about recognizing and strengthening the interdependence of various groups- getting them to educate one another and collaborate on methods to protect and manage resources. They will determine the goals of the community and whether they

[19]Shelly Mastran, speaker at the 1993 National Scenic Byway Conference, December 5-6, Washington, D.C.
[20]"In Search of Collaboration: Historic Preservation and the Environmental Movement"

match the goals of the byway program: to protect scenic quality, conserve the environment, enhance rural community character, promote tourism, foster economic development and give equal access to all modes of transportation.[21] Zoning, easements, environmental impact statements, resource inventories, bargain sales and revolving funds - the language, the law and the issues are the same. Natural habitat and human habitat is being threatened, wetlands, forests, farmlands, historic buildings and archaeological sites are all being eroded by the same forces. We are losing both biological and cultural diversity.[22]

The second phase of the Federal Scenic Byway Program is the 'legwork.' The program requires an argument of significance based on a corridor's archaeological, historical, cultural, recreational, natural, and scenic resources.[23] For some communities, the process of "proving" the importance of a road will be easier than others. Many sources should be used to gather as much information as possible. This legwork will come from the variety of talents, knowledge and desires of the members scenic byway team united in the 'coalition building' phase.

Historians and preservationists on the team should be charged with documenting the archaeological, historic and cultural resources of the road. This begins with a history of the town and determination of the road in question as having significance beyond the local community. Historic documentation of the road's archaeological, architectural, and land use patterns should be performed. Interested citizens can be educated on proper documentation and investigation of the historic landscape and buildings. Historic maps, photographs, travel journals, town records, deeds and probate records should be studied to determine the process of change to the town and road.

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[21]Philip B. Herr, *Massachusetts Place: A Guide and Self-Diagnostic Check List for Protecting Your Town's Character* (Northeastern Regional Office of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1991) 35.
[22]"In Search of Collaboration: Historic Preservation and the Environmental Movement"
[23]*1993 National Scenic Byway Conference Handbook*, American Recreation Coalition, Washington, D.C., 1993.

Outstanding cultural and historic resources probably have been inventoried by a state historic preservation organization or private preservation groups, and sometimes a town will have an historic group which has already inventoried historic sites. However, the town should undertake a study of all buildings and structures, individually and collectively, in the corridor.[24]

The byway team interested in historic features need to determine what remains of the historic and cultural landscape. A current survey and catalog through driving and walking the road needs to performed. Resources should be cataloged and photographed and the driving experience videotaped in all seasons. This will determine landscape features such as historic buildings, farm complexes, fences, walls, bridges, dams, outbuildings, etc. Combining current observations with historic documentation will determine what the pattern of the road's development and what remains of the road's historic landscape.

Determination of the road's natural resources should begin with a general description of the town's resources and then a more detailed description of natural features along the road. This information should come from the scenic byway team members interested in conservation and wildlife. In Topsfield, organization such as Essex County Greenbelt Association and the Ipswich River Audubon Sanctuary can be referred to on rare and endangered habitats and wildlife species. Federal and state surveys and studies exist for topographical features, soils, aquifers, wildlife, vegetation, and other natural and open spaces. These should be complemented by local research groups to determine the location and importance of old growth trees, watercourses, brooks, streams, drainage ditches, ponds and swamps, stone walls, fences, large trees, rock ridges, outcroppings, historic features, wooded areas, bridle trails or paths. This documentation should also be cross-

[24] *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes.* National Register Bulletin 30, National Park Service.

referenced with the historic documentation as natural features are also part of the historic landscape.

Recreational resources of the byway includes documentation of town, state and federally owned parks and land, but potential recreational spaces should be considered. But some resources are only locally known and citizens should be encouraged to define where recreational land and features exist. For example the recreational qualities of Route One in Topsfield include Wheatland's Hill, which has been the unofficial town sledding hill, the Ipswich River and the overflow which becomes an unofficial town skating pond on the Topsfield Fair Grounds and the potential to use the abandoned rail line as a link to various parks and open spaces.

Scenic resources are a combination of the first five resources, but important view sheds should also be documented through driving and walking the road in all seasons and through asking citizens where they believe the important vistas are as well as where poor vistas ones. A mailing to the community may reveal the location of view sheds and resources overlooked or under emphasized in importance.

Once the resources have documented existing protections should be recorded and analyzed for their effectiveness. Existing protections include: local, state, and federally owned lands; private land trust, conservation and preservation organizations which own land or hold easements; local, state and federal zoning, subdivision and environmental protection laws and procedures; local planning board's effectiveness, design guidelines; and voluntary protections such as tax incentives for specific land use.[25]

These protections should be analyzed for their level and effectiveness of protection. Examination of subdivision laws will reveal how they treat scenic and natural features. Topsfield's require the developer to discuss how the project will effect town character, including relation to scenic views and what makes up the view, and an environmental

[25]I have reviewed many comprehensive and master plans to determine the variety of resources needed to accurately describe conditions for preservation.

impact statement. The subdivision rules use language such as "the developer must show due regard for all natural features and community assets which, if preserved, will add attractiveness and value to the community and the subdivision."[26] The strength of these laws and zoning protections depends upon the planning board and the scenic byway study should include an evaluation of the board's effectiveness in protecting resources.

The individual resources of the road make up the collective scenic landscape and when they are mapped in a series of overlays, they will reveal concentrations of resources and view sheds. Existing protections should also be mapped and overlaid on the resources overlays illustrating where protection is secure and where it is not. This will reveal the focus or target properties and resources for the Corridor Management Plan.

However, before creating and implementing a Corridor Management Plan a 'Visioning Process' must be undertaken.[27] Visioning has already been addressed in the coalition building phase; interested parties probably came together about protecting the resources of the road because they have a vision of what they wish to protect or want to see happen to the road. At this stage the vision needs to be examined in depth and broken down.

The scenic byway team must decide what is of most value on the road by determining what makes the road special and what local citizens want to protect and to promote. The vision includes present and future and the team needs to consider what the road should look like 20 years from now. By asking itself and the larger community (perhaps through a community character survey) questions which will help define the town wants for its future: What is the character of the town? What is the character of the road? Does the road represent the larger community character? What are the individual and therefore integral features of the road that make up this character? What does the roadway

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[26]*Topsfield Planning Board Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land in the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts*, Approved and Adopted September 25, 1984, reprinted January 29, 1993.
[27]Shelly Mastran, Director of the Rural Heritage Program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Speaker at the 1993 National Scenic Byway Conference, December 5-6, Washington, D.C.

have that people need or want. Value means different things to different people, but the more clearly the community can articulate its vision, the better protection can be.[28]

Having a vision will help prioritize resources from which the corridor management plan will be developed. The Federal Scenic Byway's intention with the corridor management plan will be discussed in the next chapter.

[28]Antoinette J. Lee, *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments* (Washington, D.C.: Preservation Press, 1992) 42.

■ CHAPTER TWO ■
THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The language of ISTEA is very favorable toward strong corridor management. A scenic byway designation alone, whether state or federal, does not protect road corridors. ISTEA and the advisory committee recognize this and to receive the nomination as a Federal Scenic Byway, the development and implementation of a corridor management plan must be undertaken. The advisory committee has been instructed to address the scenic beauty and historic significance of highway corridors, operation and management standards for scenic byways and All-American roads, standards for scenic byway signs, standards for maintaining highway safety on scenic byways, design review procedures for locating highway facilities, landscaping, travelers' facilities, and procedures for designating scenic byways. These tasks and requirements are intended to bring the committee and scenic byway teams face-to-face with protection, preservation and planning issues.

It is in this planning phase where ISTEA funds are intended to be most useful. The Interim Scenic Byway Program has been authorized $10 million for 1992, 1993 and 1994. The funding is in the form of 80/20 grants (the federal share is 80 percent matched by 20 percent state funding) to states that have existing scenic highway programs. Recognizing the variety of state programs, the Federal Highway Administration is flexible in interpretation of eligibility. States are considered to have a scenic byway program if they had one or more scenic byway designated or marked by December 18, 1991.

The Interim Program also provides funding for planning, design and development of a state program for states which do not have any and safety improvements to scenic byways, construction of pedestrian and bike facilities, rest areas, turnouts, passing lanes, overlooks, interpretive facilities, improvements in recreational access, protection of

historical and cultural resources in adjacent areas and development of tourist information for scenic byways. The Federal Highway Administration gives priority to grant projects that protect the corridor as well as provide increased tourism. It favors projects that demonstrate strong local commitment to implementing a management plan, ones that are part of a program which can serve as a model for other states, and ones that are in multi-state corridors.

The corridor management plan is about developing and implementing tools and processes to protect the resources the inventory and analysis process has determined to be of value. The objective is to minimize the conflict between new development and the intrinsic resources of the corridor in order to continue benefiting the community culturally and economically.

There are a variety of tools that could be employed to meet a plan's objectives, but it should be emphasized that tools must be understood by the community, because without their support even the best intentions will not be realized. Techniques that might be employed involve two major categories: acquisition of land or control development rights (whether through purchase or donation); and regulatory techniques.[29] Put another way: either convince people to donate their land, sell it to an entity sensitive to the scenic byway objectives; or force the landowners to comply. The former two require an enlightened education process and demand good relationships with existing conservation and preservation organizations. Land management efforts can then be coordinated to achieve the best results at the least expense, confusion and controversy. The latter category requires total commitment by citizens and officials to agree on and implement strong regulatory measures - also very difficult.

A *donation* seems and often is the most desirable way to protect land. There is no initial cost to the group receiving the land and the donor receives a charitable deduction on

[29]Carraway Brower, Pollard and Propst, *Managing Development in Small Towns* (Washington, D.C.: Planner's Press, APA, 1984) 15.

the tax return. The donation of land by the owner of an important resource along the scenic byway may provide a key example to other owners and get the protective ball rolling. However, consideration should be given to the future expenses of maintaining the property and if any restrictions are placed on the gift.

When a town or interested scenic byway party acquires land through *straight purchase* or *fee-simple acquisition*, it can allow it a great opportunity to control growth.[30] The buyer looks out the for the best interest of the land's resources through imposing restrictions or designations on the lands. This may include designating parcels prime farmland or permanent resource use, which could be sold or leased with appropriate restrictions. If a town owns the land then the public is able to designate the future use of all land and really acts as a large-scale real estate developer and could construct all necessary roads and utilities, covering costs by selling the land at appreciated values. It could not only prohibit development on scenic lands, but also provide sufficient sites for necessary development which would be least disruptive to historic, natural and scenic values. Profits from investments can be returned to the public-at-large rather than to individual landowners who hold key sites. The National Park Service owns its land and can therefore completely assure maximum control of land use and design along the road.

A *bargain sale* is a combination of an outright sale and a donation. The owner sells his property for a price lower than its market value, thus in effect donating that portion of the property' market value that is not paid for.[31] Such a person is eligible for income tax deductions for the value donated. He or she receives cash, income tax deduction, no realtor fee, and no capital gains tax on the part donated.

An *installment purchase* allows the buyer to pay for property through a series of agreed-upon payments over an extended period of life. The advantage for the buyer is that

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[30]Irving Schiffman, *Alternative Techniques for Managing Growth* (University of California at Berkeley, 1989) 23.

[31]Irving Schiffman, *Alternative Techniques for Managing Growth* (University of California at Berkeley, 1989) 37.

usually no down payment is involved. The disadvantage is that the buyer does not receive title to the property until the last payment has been made. The buyer has no equity until the entire amount of the contract has been paid, but this would also spread the capital gains tax liability for the seller. Installment purchase may make sense as a way to acquire property when the owner is willing, when no more favorable form of financing is available and when it is fairly certain that the payments can be met.

A *lease-purchase* agreement is another possibility. It works like an option and can be used when there is little money and a great need to act quickly to acquire threatened land. Rent is paid under the terms of lease and is applied to an agreed-upon purchase price. The aim is to control the property over a long-term.

With a *sale* and *leaseback* arrangement the original owner will continue to occupy or use the land, but as a leaseholder - with the rights and responsibilities of a leaseholder not an owner. Owners who want to see their property protected from future speculation might find this arrangement acceptable. It may be possible for very little or no money to change hands - having purchase payments and lease payments offset each other.[32]

A *life tenancy* arrangement may take various forms - involving straight purchase, installment purchase, donation, or bargain sale - but in every case there is an agreement that the original owner will be allowed to continue to use the property for the rest of her or his life.[33] Life tenancy arrangement can be an ideal means of acquisition to prevent speculation and inappropriate development and to achieve long-term control of the land while preventing displacement of the present owner.

Funds are often not available when land is eligible to be bought or under threat of drastic change and it is realistic to admit that a town or organization attempting to protect its scenic byway will not be able to purchase land through any of the above described methods along the route to any great extent. Purchase of land is financially prohibitive, often

[32]Sources for property protection techniques are many. See Bibliography.
[33]*Economics of Rehabilitation.* National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series No. 53 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust, 1991) 7.

uninvited or unwarranted and not always capable of management of those lands necessitating exploration of other techniques to acquire land and land rights.

There are ways to deal with the costs and timing, especially if there are good relationships with private conservation organizations and interest groups. Groups such as the Trustees of Reservation and Essex County Greenbelt often have the funds and ability to act quickly with regard to critical lands.[34] They could become a temporary buyer in a *pre-acquisition* or *passthrough* process and later sell to a town, or act on the land in the best interests of the town. The town or scenic byway organization could also enter into a *joint acquisition*. The co-owners should include a party who has consistent objectives or short-term interests in the land and is willing to give up long-term control. It is wise for the scenic byway group to establish good relations with, and encourage donation of lands and development rights to private conservation groups. These groups are more equipped to care for the land.

An *option* and *right-of-first-refusal* are acquisitions of very specific rights in the property bundle, perhaps leading to outright acquisition.[35] An *option* is a right to purchase a particular piece of property at a specified price within a specified period of time. A *right-of-first-refusal* allows the party holding it to acquire a particular property by matching whatever price is offered by another potential buyer in the future. Both of these rights can often be acquired at nominal cost from property owners who are sympathetic to the preservation cause and would prefer to see it, rather than another buyer acquire the property.

There should be an attempt to encourage conservation *easements* and to protect views and resources of the road. A conservation easement is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on his or

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[34]Conversations with Jim MacDougall of Essex County Greenbelt and Richard Howe of the Trustees of Reservation, January 25, 1994.

[35]*Rural Conservation*. National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series No. 77 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1993) 4.

her property.[36] Each easement's restrictions are tailored to the particular property and to the interests of the individual owner. They might give up all or most of the rights associated with construction on the property, or maybe the rights to remove vegetation, construct buildings, to subdivide the land, restrict access, or alter building exteriors. The easement runs with the land. The original owner and all subsequent owners are bound by the restrictions of the easement. People grant conservation easements to protect their land or historic buildings from inappropriate development while retaining private ownership. By granting an easement in perpetuity, the owner may be assured that the resource values of his or her property will be protected indefinitely, no matter who the future owners are.

The donation of a conservation easement is a tax-deductible charitable gift, provided that the easement is perpetual and is donated "exclusively for conservation purposes" to a qualified conservation organization or public agency. Internal Revenue Code 170(h) generally defines "conservation purposes" to include the following:

- the preservation of land areas for outdoor recreation by, or the education of, the general public
- the protection of relatively natural habitats of fish, wildlife, or plants, or similar ecosystems
- the preservation of open space - including farmland and forest land - for scenic enjoyment or pursuant to an adopted governmental conservation policy; in either case, such open space preservation must yield a significant public benefit
- the preservation of historically important land areas or buildings[37]

To determine the value of the easement donation, the owner has the property appraised both at its fair market value without the easement restrictions and at its fair market value with the easement restrictions. The difference between these two appraised values is the tax deductible easement value. Many heirs to large historic estates and to large tracts of open space-farms and ranches in particular-face monumental estate taxes. Even if the heirs

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[36]Land Trust Alliance, "Conservation Easements" In *The Conservation Easement Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Land Trust Alliance, 1993) 1.
[37]Land Trust Alliance, "Conservation Easements" In *The Conservation Easement Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Land Trust Alliance, 1993) 2

wish to keep their property in the existing condition, federal estate tax is levied not on the value of the property for its existing use, but on its fair market value, usually the amount a developer or speculator would pay. The resulting estate tax can be so high that the heirs must sell the property to pay the taxes.

A conservation easement often can reduce estate taxes. It the property owner has restricted the property by a perpetual conservation easement before his or her death, the property must be valued in the estate at its restricted value.[38] To the extent that the restricted value is lower than the unrestricted value, the value of the estate will be less, and the estate will thus be subject to a lower estate tax. Even if a property owner does not want to restrict the property during his or her lifetime, the owner can still specify in his or her will that a charitable gift of a conservation easement be made to a qualifying organization upon the owner's death. The value of the easement gift will be deducted from the estate, reducing the value on which estate taxes are levied.

Property tax assessment usually is based on the property's market value, which reflects the property's development potential. If a conservation easement reduces the developmental potential of the property, it may reduce the level of assessment and the amount of the owner's property taxes; although state law and individual assessors and officials attitudes can effect property assessments.[39]

Easements can protect the scenic qualities of the byway, but leave stewardship to the owners of the land, allow land owners some value of their land, and promote community participation in the protection process. However, willingness to donate or sell an easement is a difficult process to get started." Naturally, a voluntary donation of an

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[38]*Establishing an Easement Program to Protect Historic, Scenic and Natural Resources,* National Trust Information Sheet No. 25 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation) 2.
[39]Land Trust Alliance, "Conservation Easements" In *The Conservation Easement Handbook* (Washington, D.C.: Land Trust Alliance, 1993) 3.

easement is the ideal, but convincing a land owner to donate an easement when no one else has committed yet is tricky.[40]

Condemning of property by *eminent domain* is a way to acquire land, but should be seen as a last resort and only used if the resource(s) are so vital to the byway that without them the integrity of the byway would be ruined.[41] Because the byway program requires strong grassroots commitment, and is a process intended to protect the public good, it is possible that the ability to use eminent domain to protect lands would hold up in court especially when used for conservation of sensitive environmental resources such as watersheds, marshes, unique geological formations and habitats for endangered species. It is a regulatory measure that has the town or other authority ending up with land. Because of the importance of Wheatland's Hill as a town sledding hill and major scenic outlook, eminent domain might be a potentially valid taking of the land. Hopefully a more agreeable means of protecting the hill will be found.

Another category of byway protection and management is through regulatory measures. In most scenic byway and road programs *zoning ordinances ,subdivision regulation* and *environmental review* are used to protect a corridor's integrity. While zoning governs the use of land in a community, including the intensity of use, subdivision regulations control the design of new development that is permitted. It sets standards for the division of larger parcels of land into smaller ones, including the location of streets, open space, utilities, and other improvements. The subdivision regulations usually contain a set of definitions, procedures for filing applications, approval procedures, design standards, and provisions for general administration.[42]

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[40]*Economics of Rehabilitation.* National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series No. 53, Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1991) 3.
[41]"Analysis and Evaluation of Innovations in Land Use Control," Graduate course in City and Regional Planning Department at the University of Pennsylvania. Professor John Keene, fall 1994.
[42]Scenic America, *Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 22-23.

A subdivision ordinance's prescribed solutions to common design or engineering problems may be more expensive than alternatives appropriate for unique site characteristics.[43] For instance, an ordinance may call for paved gutters for drainage. In relatively level areas, however, visually pleasing grassed swales allow for maximum absorption of storm-water runoff on site and may be cheaper. Design codes can be enforced and incentives for enhancement can be developed. Applying for special exemptions, variances, or zoning changes to avoid inflexible standards is frequently cumbersome, especially for small projects, where such maneuvering can be burdensome for local property owners and the reviewers of the projects.

A difficulty with traditional zoning is that different uses are typically segregated.[44] This does not always protect a community's character or its scenic environment. In rural areas especially, with development typically scattered over some distance, traditional zoning can create seemingly arbitrary or unnecessary exclusions of uses. Route One in Topsfield is zoned for a combination of Outer Residential and Agricultural, Business District Highway, Inner Residential and Agricultural and Business District Park. Instead of excluding uses, all uses are allowed, uses that without out proper design and consideration can cause destruction to the resources of the road.

Local government environmental reviews can be an important tool in protecting natural resources and farmland. Some towns (Topsfield included), include in their development-approval process, an environmental review assessment of the site. The review includes an inventory of scenic, conservation, and historic resources, among others, and the impacts of the proposed development on those resources. However, an environmental review does not by itself avoid adverse environmental impacts. It does clarify the choices involved, provides warning to the community that some harm to the

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[43]Interagency Resources Division, *Subdivision Regulation and Historic Preservation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1982) 2.

[44]Local Preservation Series, *Zoning and Historic Preservation* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1989) 1.

environment can result from the proposed development and may identify some mitigation of the worse impacts.[45]

As suggested earlier these methods can fail as a result of a lack of strict enforcement, political or economic pressures, and the ease with which exceptions to the zoning ordinances are granted. Review by the scenic byway team of the effectiveness of existing polices is a necessary step in defining improvements and strengthening existing protection tools in the corridor management plan.

One remedy to traditional zoning is an *overlay district*.[46] This is a special zone or district which is 'laid over' the original district so that affected property is placed simultaneously in two zones. The overlay zone may cover all or part of the underlying district or may be extended over additional underlying zones. They impose more restrictive standards, spelled out in the ordinance, for a certain area than those specified under basic zoning. California's byway program uses overlay zones Development within the overlay zone must conform to the requirements of both zones or the more restrictive of the two. The corridor overlay zone restrictions might include limiting signage in height, size and proximity to the road; limit allowable building height so as not to obstruct views; restrict development within 50 to 200 feet from the road through setbacks, buffers or greenbelts; or require retention of wooded areas or new landscaping in the setback. There are many possibilities of restrictions within the overlay zone dependent upon the specific road characteristics.

Another way to understand the overlay zone is in visualizing at a series of overlays, much like the analysis process of the scenic corridor resources.[47] There could be an *Historic Preservation Overlay Zone* delineating buildings or structures that are considered

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[45]Scenic America, *Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 27.
[46]Irving Schiffman, *Alternative Techniques for Managing Growth* (Berkeley, CA: University of California at Berkeley, 1989) 53.
[47]Scenic America, *Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 18.

historic and protect them through permit approval for demolition or rehabilitation plans and design guidelines and review for new construction. Protection of natural features and view shed accessibility could be contained in a *Hillside/Slope Overlay Zone*. This could be imposed on areas having a slope exceeding a minimum level. Standards include density, runoff and erosion control measures and control of cuts and grading.

A *Stream/Creek Overlay Zone* could preserve the stream and creek environment and allow for some development. Additional standards imposed on the underlying zoning could include setbacks, limits on bank modification, vegetation requirements, visual and physical access, and drainage controls. As will be described in the next chapter, the Ipswich River Protection District, the underlying zone in Topsfield, would be stronger in controlling and even preventing development, although for Howlett Brook and other smaller brooks this overlay zone might be appropriate. Defining these 'sub' overlay zones could be a method for determining what should be a *Scenic Corridor Overlay Zone*.

Zoning, by itself is often unable to ensure that new development is integrated sensitively into the community. While zoning regulates land-use location and density, it does not address the visually important design issues which have significant impact upon the landscapes and townscapes.[48] The *Site Plan Review* is most often conducted as a modified special permit process. In order to provide facts sufficient to enable the reviewing board (and other interested parties) to fully understand the implications of the proposed development, a list of site planning characteristics is required for submission by the applicant.

When purchasing or donation of lands is not possible and regulatory measures do not respond to all the resources, voluntary approaches can be utilized. A *notification* or *education program* can make owners aware of important scenic resources on their properties who may be more than willing to protect them once they learn of their existence.

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[48]Scenic America, *Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 28.

A notification program might logically follow a comprehensive scenic inventory and may even go a step further by "recognizing" the property as significant. *Recognition programs* work because they plan on the pride of the owner and can incorporate a non binding agreement to protect specified significant features, based on mutual trust, pride of ownership, recognition and appreciation of the resource, commitment to conservation, and feelings of satisfaction that participation brings. The owner can withdraw from the program at any time with advance notice, typically thirty days, and receives no financial compensation and no tax benefits.[49]

Other enhancement and incentive strategies can be used. These rewards or incentives are meant to 'persuade' landowners along the route to consider the scenic resources when making plans for their lands. They might include *tax abatements* for rehabilitation of historic structures and sites; *tax benefits* for maintaining agricultural, recreational and forest lands; *loans* and *grants*; and *technical assistance*.[50]

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 61, 61A and 61B are enabling laws that maintains agricultural and horticultural, recreational and forest land through differential tax assessment It combines incentive and regulatory types of protection. Towns in Massachusetts decide to make the law available to their people - enabling it. The decision to go under "Chapter Laws" as they are known locally is voluntary, but once a piece of land is under the laws there are restrictions as well as benefits.

Eligible land for the agricultural and horticultural rate must have minimum area of five-acres and be actively devoted to agricultural or horticultural uses.[51] There is an annual determination of eligibility and if the land is sold for other use within a period of ten years from the date of determination as agricultural or horticultural use then the current owner is

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[49]Scenic America, *Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Highway Administration, 1990) 39-40.

[50]*Economics of Rehabilitation*, National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series No. 53 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1991) 3.

[51]Massachusetts Department of Revenue, *Guidelines for Classification and Taxation of Property According to Use Property Type Classification Codes* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Local Assessment, 1991) 3.

subject to a conveyance tax imposed on the total sales price of the land. This tax is in addition to taxes imposed under any other provision of law.

If the land taxed under this law no longer qualifies it is subject to additional taxes - roll-back taxes, in the current tax year in which it is disqualified and in the four immediately preceding tax years. Land can not be sold for or converted to residential, industrial or commercial use without a 120 day waiting period, and the town has a first refusal option to match a *bona fide* offer to purchase the land, or purchase land at full and fair market value - an option period. The town may assign its options to a nonprofit conservation organization for continued agricultural and/or horticultural use of the major portion of the property.

Information produced by the Topsfield Conservation Commission has determined that 968.77 acres of Topsfield's 8,230 or 11% of the town is under the Chapter Laws.[52] Land along the scenic byway under the laws will be detailed in the next section. The corridor management plan could make the suggestion that the Chapter Laws be extended to include protection of "scenic views" which inventorying processes have determined to be acceptable. The amount of existing permanently protected land by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts Audubon, and Essex County Greenbelt is approximately 1,743 acres or 20% of the town. Add religious, Masconomet Regional High School, Salem-Beverly Water Board, Essex County Agricultural and Cooperative Society, Chapter Law lands and the total protected land amounts to 3,189 acres or 38% of Topsfield's land. This figure is sizable and it is obvious that the town cares about its open and natural spaces. However, historic resources are protected only in the village area in the Topsfield Historic District and historic landscape as a concept has not been addressed.[53]

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[52]Topsfield Conservation Commission, Town Hall, Topsfield, non-published.
[53]"Article Fifty-Six: Topsfield Historical Commission," Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts.

The resource inventory is the basis for identifying those important areas and establishing a hierarchy in the corridor management plan for acquiring and/or protecting them through other means. The real crux of the program is education, commitment and funding. Defining and implementing protective tools take time, money, patience and skill in negotiating with the critical area land owners. The property owners need to see and understand the evidence that they can continue to sell, rent, bequeath, or otherwise transfer their land - that is - experience economic rewards and at the same time benefit the community at large by protecting resources and managing growth.

A committed town could start a reserve of money through an increase in the real estate tax which would go strictly to the purposes of land acquisition.[54] In Topsfield's 1985 open space plan, this idea was laid out as a possible tool to acquire additional open space.[55] Funds are kept ready to use in the event that a critical property should suddenly become available or threatened. An ISTEA project grant could also provide the startup money for such a fund. The reserve fund is repaid once the property is sold or revolved to a sympathetic buyer who agrees to manage, develop, or restore the properties in accordance with deed restrictions. Resale of the properties, either as is, or with improvements, replenish the town's funds for new projects.

When deciding which protection tools need to be altered, strengthened or added to the complement a scenic byway team must have available to successfully protect its corridor consider the following:

1. Make sure that project and community transportation goals are well defined and understood by all who are involved in the byway project. Design standards and other protection tools should not be applied in a vacuum: they should logically follow from community goals and objectives for the project.
2. Seek a creative solution that addresses overall community needs. Find areas of commonalties as well as differences.

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[54]*Rural Conservation.* National Trust for Historic Preservation Information Series No. 77 (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1993) 6.

[55]Topsfield Open Space Committee with additional assistance from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, *Town of Topsfield Open Space Plan,* December 1985.

3. Learn to use the system of public participation and review of transportation planning. Attend hearings and reviews. Make sure that local support and concerns are heard.
4. Be committed to finding a good solution. Try to understand the diversity of community values and perspectives.
5. Improve the system. Work with public agencies, council and commission members, and state legislators to make the system work better for everyone.[56]

The next three chapters comprise a preliminary scenic byway case study for the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike in Topsfield, Massachusetts. Chapter Three includes a description and history of Topsfield; Chapter Four, the history of the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike; and Chapter Five, a breakdown of current resources along the byway in Topsfield including suggestions for protections. It should be emphasized that the determination of significant resources and the suggestions for protection are the author's personal opinion derived from research, observation and study of preservation and planning theory and practice.

[56]Scenic America, "Transportation Design Standards for Livable Communities" (Washington, D.C.: Scenic America).

■ CHAPTER THREE ■
TOPSFIELD: A DESCRIPTION AND HISTORY

Description

Topsfield is situated in the approximate center of Essex County which is in the northeast corner of Massachusetts (Map 1). The town has been richly endowed by nature in the Ipswich River, the marshes and lowlands along it, and its important tributary brooks, Pye, Howlett, Mile, Fish and Nichols, and from rolling hills and valleys are varied views in all directions.

Physiographically, the town lies within the New England Seaboard Lowland, a relatively smooth coastal strip of land with some hills usually below 400 and 500 contours.[57] Topsfield's topography is more varied than the average coastal town or the upland towns further inland. The range of elevation is from about 20 to 250 feet above mean sea level (Map 2). The highest points in the central portion of town from its northern to southern border are Town and Great Hills north of the river, Pingree or Wheatland, Rea Farm and Witch Hills south of the river. From these high points one can see Ipswich Bay to the east, Mt. Wachusett to the west and the Monadnock range to the Northwest. Land surfaces slope into valleys easterly and westerly from these hills. An exceptional view of the town and the interval in which it is situated may be enjoyed from atop Wheatland's Hill.

Perhaps the most important feature of Topsfield is the Ipswich River which has its source in Wilmington, Massachusetts and flows in a generally northeast direction for about twenty-seven miles to Ipswich and the Atlantic Ocean. The river is about twenty feet wide in its upper reaches and widens to about one hundred feet at Ipswich. The overall fall is

[57]Natural Resources Technical Team of Essex County, *Natural Resources Program of the Town of Topsfield* (Hathorne, MA: Essex Conservation District, 1973) 8.

about seventy feet. More than seven miles of river flows through Topsfield. It provides major drainage in Topsfield and through numerous smaller brooks including Howlett, Mile, School and Nichols Brook. The seasonal flow of the Ipswich River and its tributary streams is variably with average flow of 70.8 cubic feet per second.[58] Several small ponds are also present, particularly near the Ipswich River. These ponds include Rockery Pond, Waterfowl Pond and Teal Pond. Freshwater swamps are present in many areas.

Although the Ipswich River is an important source of drinking water for other communities, including the cities of Beverly and Salem, it is not used by Topsfield as a water supply. However, the river is a vital natural resource for preservation of wildlife and recreation. Several hundred people come each year to canoe, swim and fish in the river. The Ipswich River intersects Route One on the slope of Wheatland's Hill forming the southern edge of the Topsfield Fairgrounds. During the winter months, the river floods on the Fairgrounds providing a town skating area.

Bedrock deposits in the Topsfield area are characterized by igneous formations throughout the town. Salem *gabbro-diorites* are the dominant bedrock type throughout most of the town. Other bedrock formations include Dedham *grano-diorites* and Quincy granites which occur along the town's eastern border and in the central portion of town. Soil types in Topsfield are characterized by two major associations. Soils of the Paxton-Woodbridge-Montank association are present near the junction of Route One and Route 97 (High Street) and in northeastern and southern areas.[59] These soils occur in deep, nearly level to steep deposits. They are generally excessively drained sandy and loamy soils found in outwash deposits. Limited distributions of the Canton-Charlton-Sutton association are also present in the town. These soils occur in deep, nearly level to steep

[58]Topsfield Conservation Commission, *Topsfield Open Space Plan* (Topsfield, 1970) 2.
[59]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 3.

deposits along the town's western boundary. They are generally well-drained loamy soils formed in friable glacial till.[60]

The original forest growth in Topsfield and Essex County in general consisted of a mixed growth of white pine, oak, chestnut, popular, maple, birch and some other hardwoods and conifers. However, secondary growth patterns characterized by second growth oak and chestnut in the uplands as well as scrub oak and pine. Some birch, popular, juniper, maple and white pine are also present.[61]

Topsfield's mammal population is typical of other Essex County towns with rabbit, skunk, fox, raccoon, woodchuck, squirrel and mice most prominent. Deer may sometimes be observed along the Ipswich River, in the State forest and park or in the fields between Witch Hill and Rea Farm Hill, the latter two along the proposed scenic byway. Topsfield's extensive wetlands, ponds and streams provide habitat for numerous water fowl, otter, muskrat and occasionally beaver as well as turtles, frogs and other amphibian life. Several species of fish are found in Hood's Pond and the Ipswich River. Woodland and Meadows abound with migratory and resident song birds.[62]

The average annual temperature of Topsfield is approximately 50 degrees Fahrenheit with a January average of 30 degrees and a July average of 71 degrees. Summers are hot and humid, moderated at times by gentle sea breezes. The growing season averages about 170 days. Mean annual precipitation is 43 inches.[63] Snowfall depths, which vary widely from year to year depending on winter storm tracks, can range from 30 to 70 inches per year. In the Boston area, the average snowfall depth per year is 50 inches, in Topsfield, 55 inches.

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[60]Natural Resources Technical Team of Essex County, *Natural Resources Program of the Town of Topsfield* (Hathorne, MA: Essex Conservation District, 1973) 14.
[61]Topsfield Conservation Commission, *Topsfield Open Space Plan* (Topsfield, 1985) 5.
[62]Information from Essex County Greenbelt and the Ipswich River Audubon Sanctuary.
[63]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 6.

History

Although few native sites have been found, early settlement activity was likely along river and coastal margins. Topsfield was inhabited by members of the Pawtucket group which extended from Saugus/Salem area north to the York area of Maine.[64] Locally this group is commonly referred to as the Agawam Indians who may have been a sub-tribe of the Massachusetts under the leadership of the Penacooks. In 1638, their leader Masconomet deeded the bulk of this land to John Winthrop, son of the first governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for twenty pounds.

Although Topsfield, first named "New Meadows" for the Indian name She-new-we-medy" - the pleasant place by flowing waters - was not officially started until 1643, several Ipswich colonists resided in the area by that date as tenants and squatters. Some of those who settled in New Meadows originally came from Essex County, England. Samuel Symonds, who was an assistant in the Massachusetts Court had come from Toppesfield, a small parish in Essex County, England, just north of London. In 1648 he changed the name New Meadows to Toppesfield. Eventually the spelling became Topsfield.[65] In 1650 the town was incorporated. The meeting house was established by 1658 although settlement remained generally dispersed until the end of the eighteenth century (Map 3).

Topsfield began as an agricultural community because of the convenience of the open meadows along the river which provided hay for the kine without the need of clearing the forest. Indian corn, wheat, barley and rye were the most important food crops; fruit and vegetables were also grown. Topsfield grew slowly and in addition to farming and animal husbandry, other early trades included milling, spinning, weaving, shoemaking, tanning,

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[64]Town of Topsfield, Anniversary Committee, *Proceedings at the Celebration of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts, August 16-17, 1900: With a History of Toppesfield Parish, Essex County, England* (Topsfield, MA: Anniversary Committee, 1901) 17.

[65]Sidney Perley, "Topsfield Village in 1800," In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, Vol. VII, 1901) 23.

tailoring and blacksmithing. The first mill was erected on Mile Brook and followed by the Peabody sawmill in 1672. Tanneries may have also been present during this period.[66]

Topsfield includes a significant number of first period dwellings. Best known is the Parson Capen house of 1683, and restored by the Topsfield Historical Society in 1913. Later in the eighteenth century center chimney houses were constructed with symmetrical side elevations. Larger houses with pairs of interior chimneys related to the Georgian plan were built in small numbers including a gambrel roof example.

By 1765 when the first census was taken the population was 719 and in 1776, 773. Ethnically, virtually all of Topsfield's population was still of English descent. The religion of the town's residents remained Puritan/Congregationalism. Land patterns developed during the earliest white settlement continued throughout the colonial period with most large proprietary grants broken up in the 1670s and 1680s and much of the common lands divided (Map 4). Several large tracts of land (500) acres were still held in common by town residents although even these were broken up by 1772 until only a training field remained. Some large parcels of land were privately owned, but the trend was for much smaller holdings.[67]

By the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century Topsfield was increasingly developing as a settled, centralized village shifting from its original focus at the old meeting house south along Main Street to its junction with Washington Street. In 1703 a new meeting house was built on the common, taken down and rebuilt in 1759. A school was kept in town in private homes.

During the Federal period many new roads were laid out, extended or improved including the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike, opened as a toll road in 1805.[68] The

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[66]George F. Dow, *History of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Topsfield, MA: The Topsfield Historical Society, 1940) 49.

[67]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 19.

[68]H. Folansbee Long, "Topsfield Streets and Ways," In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historic Society, Vol. XIII, 1907) 6.

daily stage connections provided by the Eastern Stage Company after 1818 converted Topsfield (at the halfway point between Newburyport and Boston) into the stage center of Essex County (Map 5). Hotels and taverns sprang up and the Topsfield Hotel, became the best tavern on the Eastern State Route.[69]

The population in 1790 was 780, in 1800, 788 and in 1830 grew to 1010 individuals. Private academies were in existence by 1827 and a subscription library began in 1794. Federal Topsfield remained principally an agricultural town, in 1791, 7,019 acres were farmed (Map 6). Farmers devoted considerable attention to raising livestock or slaughtering. Other industries included tanneries and cider, grist and sawmill operations. Manufacturers included blacksmiths, shoemakers, carpenters and wheelwrights. There was an attempt to establish a copper mine in 1839, but it failed.[70]

A variety of building forms came with this period, mainly two and half stories and five bays in width. Center chimney houses were built in small numbers, but mainly houses with multiple chimneys and modified plans. The first school house was built in 1794, the meeting house was remodeled in 1817 and the Topsfield Academy was constructed in 1827 (Map 7).

Throughout the second and third quarter of the nineteenth century Topsfield's street network continued its development (Map 8). The first railroad cars came through in 1853 making the stage service obsolete.[71] In 1860 the population was 1,292. Methodists began meeting in 1830, Unitarians between 1829 and 1836 and Roman Catholics traveled to Danvers after 1859. An Athenaeum was established in 1840 and a Society for Improving Agriculture was formed in 1850.[72]

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[69]H. Folansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike," In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historic Society, Vol. XI, 1906) 21.
[70]George F. Dow, *History of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Topsfield, MA: The Topsfield Historical Society, 1940) 56.
[71]H. Folansbee Long, "Topsfield Streets and Ways," In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historic Society, Vol. XIII, 1907) 10.
[72]*Historical Manual of the Congregational Church of Topsfield, Massachusetts, 1663-1907* (Topsfield, MA: Congregational Church, 1907) 14.

Manufacturing increased during this period allowing Topsfield to enjoy an era of prosperity. The railway came through in the 1840s (Map 8). Between the years 1840 and 1865 agriculture declined from 59% to 42% while manufacturing increased from 40% to 58%.[73] Farmers raised large hay, potato and corn crops and smaller crops of rye, barley, oats and vegetables. Small flax and tobacco fields were also cultivated. Butchering of animals for Salem, Lynn and other markets was one of the town's principal businesses. Shoe-making was the principal manufacturing, but other trades included carriage and harness making, blacksmithing, milling and carpentry.

The present Congregationalist Church was built on the Common in 1842 and the present Methodist Church was erected also on the Common in 1853. A commercial core was being developed in what is the 'downtown' of today. Residential building was characterized by the popular forms of the day, Greek and Gothic Revival and Italianate.

During the late industrial period the town center was substantially improved and intensified, although population declined from 1,213 in 1870 to 1,030 in 1900, by 1915 it had increased to 1,173 ((Map 9-11).[74] The Town Hall was constructed in 1873 which also housed the public library. With the Civil War, the town's period of relative prosperity came to an end and agriculture reassumed its position as the mainstay of the economy.[75] Farmers turned increasingly to dairying and consequently hay and fodder production was increased. The number of livestock almost doubled from 1875 to 1885. In the 1890s poultry raising emerged as an important activity. In 1895 dairy, hay and poultry accounted for 71% of the $175,000 agricultural product, while fruits and vegetables accounted for another 17%.[76]

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[73]D. Hamilton Hurd, *History of Essex County, Massachusetts*. Volume II (Philadelphia: J.W. Lewis and Company, 1888) 206.

[74]Benjamin Arrington, *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1922) 29.

[75]George F. Dow, *History of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Topsfield, MA: The Topsfield Historical Society, 1940) 67.

[76]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 38.

New housing construction was restricted almost exclusively to large estates and many of the smaller farms were bought up to become part of large estates.[77] The Reverend George H. Perkins' address during the celebration of Topsfield's 250th anniversary (1900) described Topsfield as "Nature's retreat for weary bodies and tired brains."[78] Soon after 1900, as roads improved and the automobiles became available, the town became a favored residential area for those who worked in Salem, Beverly, Lynn and Boston.

By the 1930s rail service was discontinued and between 1950 and 1954 Interstate 95 was constructed through southwestern Topsfield. The town's major local routes remain Topsfield and Ipswich Road, running east/west and the Newburyport Turnpike (U.S. Route One) running north/south. Population decreased in 1920 to 900 individuals and then began to increase. By 1955, Topsfield claimed 2,208 residents and commercial, industrial and residential construction boomed. St. Rose's Church was erected in 1922, a high school in 1932 and a library in 1935, the latter two built on the Common. The major intersections with Route One became oriented to the automobile.

Upon the liquidation of the Herrick Shoe Co., earlier in the twentieth century, Topsfield was without a single significant manufacturing firm until 1945. The acreage of open farmland had reached its peak about 1830 and by 1940 much of this cleared area had reverted to woodland. Many of the active farms were converted to estates.[79] The Topsfield Fair stimulated the economy for a short time every fall, providing jobs in service and retail firms. With the end of World War II, the pressures of an exploding population and a vastly improved road system were the impetus for an era of tremendous growth. Starting from a very low base, Topsfield became overnight one of the fastest growing

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[77]Benjamin Arrington, *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1922) 74.

[78]"Address by the Reverend George H. Perkins, President of the Day, in Proceedings of the Celebration of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Incorporation if the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts, August 16-17, 1900" (Topsfield, MA: Anniversary Committee, 1901) 28.

[79]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 15.

communities in eastern Massachusetts and continues to grow faster than most of its neighbors.[80]

In 1946 Topsfield adopted its first zoning law. Since then it has been modified to increase minimum lot size (Map 12). In 1949 the town voted for its first municipal water system. Planned originally to only serve the center of the town, it has been expanded in all directions. In 1954 the town passed a soil erosion bylaw to control indiscriminate stripping of loam and excavation of gravel and in 1956 a short building code was adopted. In 1964 a Flood Plain District was added to the zoning by-law to prevent dredging, filling or building in the flood plain of the Ipswich River and its major tributary brooks.[81] After a two year study in 1961 professional planners presented a comprehensive long range town plan. However, very few of the plan's recommendations were adopted.

In 1966 a second well field was added. In 1972 a Conservation Commission was appointed under the State Wetland Protection Act and an Historic District was established in 1973. A Board of Health was established in 1982. The town voted for a local Wetlands Bylaw in 1983.[82] Topsfield has no public sewerage system. The town has many areas of heavy clay soil which make effective septic tank disposal field systems costly and difficult to construct. Where the lots are less than one acre and where the ground water level is high an effective disposal system is virtually impossible.

Topsfield has risen to the status of affluent residential exurb of the Greater Boston Metropolitan Area.[83] Today it is small suburban community of horse farms and affluent residences of about thirteen thousand square miles or 8,230 acres. Its extraordinary nineteenth century meeting house center has survived intact. The current population is around 5,500.[84]

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[80]Technical Planning Associates, *Master Plan for Topsfield, Massachusetts* (New Haven, CT: 1961) 15.
[81]Topsfield Conservation Commission, *Topsfield Open Space Plan* (Topsfield, 1985) 37.
[82]Topsfield Conservation Commission, *Topsfield Open Space Plan* (Topsfield, 1985) 38.
[83]Massachusetts Historic Commission. *Reconnaissance Survey Report for Topsfield, MA* (Boston: MA, 1993) 1.
[84]Information from the Topsfield Assessors Office.

Topsfield's citizens and administrator are concerned with their town's future. They have made attempts to struggle with balancing growth, continue prosperity and preserve resources. Committees and teams have compiled the following reports: 1961 Master Plan (not adopted), 1974 Topsfield Historic District, 1975 Natural Resource Program, 1985 Open Space Plan, various Conservation Commission Studies, and other small-scale studies. The scope of the scenic byway program provides an opportunity to bring the various interested groups together for the common goal of protecting the various resources each has felt is important.

■ CHAPTER FOUR ■
THE BOSTON AND NEWBURYPORT TURNPIKE

Scenic byway programs would not be under analysis if there was not a belief that many American roads have significant cultural, historic, archaeological, scenic, recreational and natural features. A road should be seen as a programmatic landscape, an exhibition with a collection of objects open to many interpretations. In Topsfield's case the landscape is shaped by generations of farmers and other rural residents and includes stone walls, forests, a river, open fields, buildings and views from high points along the route.

Route One is tied directly to the American transportation history; its development reflecting the history of the Atlantic seaboard states and shaping the economic and social landscape, "a realm of signs, a set of clues to the constantly receding mystery of nationality."[85] Most know it as the first official inter-colonial highway of the country stretching from the Canadian border to the Florida Keys. In early seventeenth century colonists made trails or used existing Native American paths to establish lines of communication between settlements. North of Baltimore the road is known as the Old Post Road and connected the leading cities of all the thirteen Colonies except Delaware. In Virginia, the road was known as the King's Highway. Thomas Jefferson complained the best speed he could make was three miles an hour.[86]

Route One runs through country intimately bound up with important events, although in this century increasing congestion of the metropolitan areas has caused the highway in some places to be rerouted to bypass the centers of cities it formerly traversed.

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[85]Phil Patton, *Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 13.

[86]Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, U.S. *One: Maine to Florida* (New York: Modern Age Books, Inc. 1938) pp. xi.

In Maine the road runs close to the sites of the first two settlements attempted in New England; in Florida it passes through St. Augustine, the oldest settlement in the present United States.[87]

During the eighteenth century development and expansion of the colonies created commercial transportation needs and new vehicles. The first common carrier service in America established under a franchise by the Governor of New Jersey over what was to become U.S. One with a crude sort of carrier. About 1725 the stage wagon, of English origin, appeared in the Colonies.[88]

By the beginning of the nineteenth century commerce was making strides in Massachusetts. Better communication between inland towns was needed and with this came the demand for better roads. This gave rise to turnpike corporations with the roads maintained by various communities. As the towns were not able to expend large amounts of capital required to construct such roads, and as the cost was greater than any single individual cared to assume, a corporation for each enterprise was created by legislative authority; therefore a turnpike is a private toll road operating under a charter.

In less than ten years after the first turnpike was chartered (1796) forty-two companies were created and empowered to build roads in Massachusetts and Maine.[89] At least 135 turnpike corporations were chartered in New England between 1796 and 1806 ranging from three to fifty miles each totaling approximately 3,000 miles.[90] Each pike had its own name and individual charges. These turnpikes were considered to be improved roads and some companies attempted to lay permanent stone surfaces, financing and

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[87]Arthur H. Clarke, "Historic Highways of America," In *Indian Thoroughfares* (Cleveland, OH: Vol. 2, 1902-1905) 113.

[88]Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, U.S. *One: Maine to Florida* (New York: Modern Age Books, Inc. 1938) pp. xiii.

[89]H. Follansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike," in *The Historical Collections of the Topsfield Historical Society*, Vol. XI (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1906) 1.

[90]Holbrook Stewart H., *The Old Post Road: The Story of the Boston Post Road* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962) 34-5.

building them according to English precedent. The corporations charged tolls not only for the cost and maintenance of the road but also for profit of stockholders.

The first meeting for the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike Corporation was held April 14, 1803.[91] The following summer the directors walked the proposed route and worked out compensation with those whose land the route would intersect. Many articles and notices of work on the turnpike occur in the local papers, the *Salem Gazette* and the *Salem Register*. The announcement was made:

> NOTICE is hereby given, to all persons interested in the laying out the NEWBURYPORT TURNPIKE ROAD in the County of Essex.--That the Committee appointed by the Court of Sessions to lay out said way and to estimate the damages any person may sustain thereby, propose to meet at the head of State street, in said Newburyport, on Monday the 18th July inst. A.M. and thence proceed upon the business of their appointment.[92]

Work on the turnpike began August 23, 1803 on High Street in Newburyport. The first eleven miles from the head of State Street to Peabody's mills in Topsfield was the responsibility of the Newburyport directors. Captain John Ingersoll had charge of the next ten miles to Malden and Gorham Parsons superintended the construction of the bridge over the Parker River in Newbury.

The building of the roadbed was in general given to contractors who often hired men from each locality to work in their vicinity and brought their own tools. Peleg Slocum of Lynn, built three and a half miles from Peabody's mills to Joseph Chaplin's house in Rowley, for $8,000 and a hogshead of rum.[93] The grade was not to exceed one foot in twenty and was to be covered with gravel ten inches deep. Those men not working under contract received $1.25 a day for ditching, a laborer with pick and shovel received five or six shillings, and a man with cart and oxen was paid $1.57. Mason, carpenters and

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[91]Newbury Turnpike Corporation, *An Act for Incorporating Certain Persons for the Purpose of Laying Out and Making a Turnpike Road, from Newburyport to the Chelsea Bridge* (Boston: Russell and Butler, 1908).
[92]*Salem Register*, July 12, 1803
[93]H. Follansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike," in *The Historical Collections of the Topsfield Historical Society*, Vol. XI (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1906) 5.

painters constructed toll-houses, hotels and bridges and received an average of nine shillings per day.[94]

Bridges were a great expense. Sixty-two were built over the first twelve miles from Newburyport to Topsfield and sixty-nine from Topsfield to Boston.[95] The bridge over the Ipswich River, with a span of seventy feet, the hill on the south and the long marsh on the north, required three hundred feet of abutments. The only entry in the Topsfield town records concerning the turnpike appears April 1, 1805 when it was voted, "To grant liberty to the Newburyport Turnpike Corporation to erect a dry bridge across the road near Joseph Andrews."[96]

The most difficult and expensive section was the Topsfield to Malden route given its hills. Nine hills were cut down to varying depths from twelve to twenty-five feet and smaller hills from six to twelve feet. Accidents were frequent and two fatalities occurred in Topsfield on River Hill (Pingree's or Wheatland's today). On the July 19, 1804 Jonathan Hoyt, aged twenty of Concord, New Hampshire, was "killed instantly, by the falling of earth, while at work on the Turnpike.[97] Another accident occurred "At Topsfield, on Wednesday last, [when] Mr. Francis Skerry, aged 50; [was] killed by the falling of a large quantity of earth from the bank at Topsfield hill, while at work upon the turnpike road, another man was much hurt at the same time so as to be obliged to have a leg amputated. One man was killed and two wounded, at the same place, and in the same manner, last summer."[98]

The December 28, 1804 issue of the *Salem Gazette* reported, "25 miles of the road are made; bridges built over six rivers; hills reduced in some instances 25 feet; two houses of entertainment built, one of which is now open for travelers; and it is expected the whole

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[94]H. Folansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike" In *Topsfield Historical Collections* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, Vol. XI, 1906) 3.
[95]Andrew H. Malcolm and Roger Strauss III, *U.S. 1: America's Original Main Street* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991) 41.
[96]Topsfield Town Records April 1, 1805 in collection of Topsfield Historical Society.
[97]*Salem Gazette* , August 13, 1804.
[98]*Salem Gazette*, July 26, 1805.

route of 26 miles (from Newburyport to Malden road) will be open early in the spring."[99] The turnpike's traffic encouraged the construction of public, private and commercial buildings along its path.

Three toll-houses were constructed: Newbury, Topsfield and Chelsea. Topsfield's toll-house was located at the Salem Road crossing and Moses Pillsbury was the first toll gate operator. He was allowed $240 a year and the use of a two-story house built in 1804-5 along the turnpike. The first toll was taken on February 11, 1805.[100] He was followed by Leonard Croass and Moody Morse. The last toll operator was Luke Towne. After the turnpike corporation went out of business the house was bought by Asa Pingree.[101]

The charges to use the pikes varied until 1805 when Massachusetts General Court officially set the rates: "For a coach, chariot, phaeton, or other four-wheel spring carriages, drawn by two horses, twenty-five cents; two-horse wagons, ten cents; cart or wagon drawn by a pair of oxen, ten cents; man and horse, four cents; sleigh or sled, two horses, or two oxen, eight cents; horses, mules, neat cattle, led or driven, each one cent; sheep or swine, by the dozen, three cents. The same act also forbade collection of tolls "from persons going to or from a church or grist mill, on military duty or on journeys within the town where the gate is located."[102]

A number of hotels along the route were constructed. The Topsfield Hotel was probably designed by Samuel McIntire. In his scrapbook is a sheet of plans with the annotation: "sketches for the plans of the floors of a Building, designed for a tavern, for the Newbury turnpike." The proportions and fenestration agree with the sketch of the hotel made by Alonzo Lewis in 1835-40.[103] It was built at a cost of $22,296 on a lot of four

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[99]*Salem Gazette*, December 28, 1804.
[100]H. Follansbee Long, "Topsfield Streets and Ways" (Topsfield Historical Collections, Vol. XII, 1907).
[101]John H. Towne, "Topsfield Houses and Buildings," in *Topsfield Historical Collections*, Vol. VIII (Topsfield, MA, 1902) 5.
[102]Holbrook Stewart H., *The Old Post Road: The Story of the Boston Post Road* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962) 35-36.
[103]Fiske Kimball, *Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver: The Architect of Salem* (Salem, MA: Essex Institute, 1940) 106.

and a half acres. Outbuildings included ice house, stables and a blacksmith shop. The hotel was twelve miles from Newburyport and "being a very convenient building was considered the best tavern on the "Eastern" roads.[104] The furnishings of the hotel cost $713 and the buildings were rented for $400 a year.[105] On May 2, 1809 the running of the hotel was taken over by Ephraim Wildes, Jr. when he ran the following advertisement in the *Salem Gazette*:

TOPSFIELD HOTEL

> The subscriber respectfully informs the public, that he has taken the Hotel in Topsfield, hereby soliciting their patronage; promising travellers and parties of pleasure every attention and accommodation in his power, and particularly he invites the attention of invalid and other ladies and gentlemen, who may choose to spend any part of the Summer in the country, to the elevated, salubrious and delightful situation of the Hotel, and the large and pleasant chambers which he wishes to appropriate to their use.[106]

Some important local events took place at the hotel including a caucus held in 1808 to denounce the Embargo.[107] The Essex Agricultural Society was organized in 1818 and held their annual meetings held there in the 1820's and 1830's. County conventions, the establishment of the lyceum in 1829 and the incorporation of the Essex County Natural History Society in 1829 all took place there. The Freemasons of Essex County, the Essex County Anti-Slavery Society, the Essex County Teacher's Association and other groups all met at the Hotel.

Judge Daniel Appleton White, a state senator, wrote his wife during his travel down the turnpike to attend the sessions in Boston:

> I reached Topsfield very well, and in good season on Sunday evening, and had a good night's sleep. There I found a man with a sleigh, bound to

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[104]H. Follansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike," in *The Historical Collections of the Topsfield Historical Society*, Vol. XI (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1906) 12.
[105]H. Follansbee Long, "The Newburyport and Boston Turnpike," in *The Historical Collections of the Topsfield Historical Society*, Vol. XI (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1906) 8-9.
[106]*Salem Gazette*, May 2, 1809.
[107]C. Lawrence Bond, *Houses and Buildings of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1989) 29.

> Boston. On Monday morning, the inn-keeper, with four or five stout men and horses turned out to help us on our way, but, after proceeding about two miles, they gave it up as impracticable, and we returned to the Hotel and dined,--when two other men with sleighs arrived, bound to Boston: so after dinner, we all set out again, with shovels as well as horses and men, and made out to proceed about seven miles when we were compelled to take shelter for the night in a not very comfortable habitation. This morning we set out again, and succeeded in reaching Boston this afternoon. You told me not to venture on horseback, but I had no other way, but to come on foot; and, as the other men were good enough to precede me with their sleighs, I was enabled to ride almost the whole of the way, whereas they walked behind their sleighs a great part of it. The snow was, in some places, drifted extremely, some banks from twelve to twenty feet deep. But I am safe at my lodgings, and feel very well.[108]

During its forty years of existence the hotel changed hands a number of times. In the *Salem Gazette*, July 15, 1823 an article read:

> SALE THIS DAY
>
> The spacious and elegant HOTELS owned by the Newburyport Turnpike Corporation, situated in Topsfield and Lynnfield together with all the Lands connected with them, and all the Furniture belonging to each of the Houses * * * Also, about five acres of Land in Ipswich, near the toll gate kept by Mr. Brown. The Hotel in Topsfield, and the land in Ipswich, will be sold at 12 o'clock P.M. at said Hotel.[109]

The Lynnfield Hotel brought $2,250 and the Topsfield Hotel $3,135.[110] Cyrus Cummings bought the latter and:

> Respectfully informs his friends and the public that he continues this spacious establishment. This Hotel is situated on a delightful and commanding eminence, on the Newburyport Turnpike, about 9 miles from Salem, is three stories high, has large and commodious rooms, and offers a most agreeable and healthy summer residence to invalids and others who are disposed to spend the summer months in the country. The bar is always supplied with the choicest liquors, and the table with the best provisions of the season. Parties of pleasure and others may depend on respectful attendance and every effort will be used to give perfect satisfaction to all who favor the establishment with their patronage.[111]

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[108]"Winter Travel on the Newburyport Turnpike in 1811," *Topsfield Historical Collections*, Vol. XXX (Topsfield, MA, 1933) 121-122.
[109]*Salem Gazette*, July 15, 1823.
[110]*Salem Gazette*, July 22, 1823.
[111]*Salem Gazette*, July 13, 1824.

It was offered for sale again in 1835 by Susan Cummings who described it as "situated on an eminence that overlooks the village, and commands an extensive view of the surrounding scenery, which is uncommonly beautiful. It has for many years been a favorite summer retreat...Seven regular Stage coaches stop at the Hotel every week day and the private travel has been constantly increasing."[112]

In 1838 John Holland, once "one of the most intelligent, obliging, and temperate of that exemplary body of drivers" on the Eastern stage bought the Hotel and:

> Fitted it up in the best manner for travellers and boarders. The situation is one of the most commanding and delightful in the country...and is believed that few places in the vicinity of the metropolis present so many inducements for a summer residence. The apartments are spacious and airy; the table will be supplied with the choicest products of the market, and every attention showed to individuals and families, whether they remain for a single night, or during the warm season.[113]

Another house along the turnpike was used for various purposes throughout the nineteenth century. Built in 1808 as a dwelling house, it was first occupied by John Peabody. For several years it was used as a public house or tavern. The south-west room and basement used as a grocery store by Nehemiah Perkins. From 1830 to 1850 seven different ministers of the Methodist Church lived in the house and it became known as 'the Parsonage.' Samuel S. McKenzie taught a singing school there in 1848 and 1849.[114] The first Methodist Church was built along the turnpike in 1831. Numerous houses were brought from other locations to the Newburyport Turnpike.

Perhaps the most important landmark of the turnpike in Topsfield are the Fairgrounds. In 1818 the following notice ran in the *Salem Gazette*:

> AGRICULTURE. The Farmers, and others, in the County of Essex who are desirous of promoting their Agricultural interest, are requested to meet the Hotel in Topsfield, on Monday, the 16th day of February current, at

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[112]*Salem Gazette*, May 28, 1835.
[113]*Salem Gazette*, July 13 and July 27, 1838.
[114]John H. Towne, "Topsfield Houses and Buildings," in *Topsfield Historical Collections*, Vol. VIII (Topsfield, MA, 1902) 6.

> eleven o'clock, A.M. for the purpose of forming an AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY FOR THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, in aid of the Massachusetts Agricultural society. As the object of this meeting is important, it is hoped there will be a general attendance.[115]

The Society continued to meet at the Topsfield Hotel to discuss new agricultural practices. Two years later in 1820 a location was determined for holding a Cattle Show and Exhibition near the hotel on October 12, 1820.[116] Commentaries on the show read as follows:

> Yesterday was our Essex Cattle Show at Topsfield. The weather was unfavourable to this first exhibition of our farmers...stock and products of different farms are brought into composition, and the embodying in a common fund, the various knowledge and skill of individuals for the benefit of all, cannot fail to have an improving effect in our agriculture, and like manure spread over them to enrich our fields...nearly 100 animals of various kinds were exhibited--that the working oxen (9 or 10 pair) probably have not been excelled in any show in the State--that bulls, calves and swine were for the most part very fine (the calves we have heard mentioned as very superior)--that among the specimens of domestic manufactures were some beautiful lace from Ipswich, for which that ancient town has been for many years famous--that the yoke of oxen from our alms-house farm drew the heaviest load in the trial of working cattle, that the plough of Hon. T. Pickering, president of the society, performed the best ploughing.[117]

The Cattle Show, Ploughing Match and Exhibition continues to the present day every fall and is the oldest continuing annual agricultural fair in America.

The turnpikes allowed the stagecoach industry to thrive. The old line of mail stages was started by Exra Lunt in 1774 and was succeeded in 1794 by Jacob Hale until the Eastern Stage Company was incorporated in June, 1818. Previously the stagecoaches ran over the old post road, forty-three miles to Boston and taking from six to eight hours.[118] The directors of the turnpike saw an opportunity to convince the postal system to use the new road. Dr. Nehemiah Cleveland of Topsfield was the first president of the Eastern

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[115]*Salem Gazette*, February 10, 1818.
[116]*Salem Gazette*, February 29, 1820.
[117]*Salem Gazette*, October 6 and 10, 1820.
[118]Holbrook Stewart H., *The Old Post Road: The Story of the Boston Post Road* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962) 67.

Stage Company. For $365 a year, the Company would have use of the road from the Newbury gate to Topsfield where it would turn at the "half-way house" to collect mail from other towns. The fee increased in 1824 to $800, in 1830 to $900 and 1834 to $1,000. This fee covered not only the postal carriers, but passenger vehicles belonging to the Eastern Stage Company. The fare from Boston to Newburyport on the ordinary stage was $2.00, but by the mail stage it was $2.50 and to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, $4.00. Articles in the local newspapers help to illustrate life during the stage coach days:

> **Stage Accident.** On Tuesday last an accident occurred to one of the stages belonging to the line from Portsmouth to Salem, which, though not fatal, was disastrous in its consequences. The passengers had just dined at the Topsfield Hotel, and the stage had advanced a short distance towards Salem, when a dog suddenly sprang over the wall, into the road. This alarmed the horses, and the leaders wheeled round so suddenly that the coach was instantly overset, and the upper part dashed to pieces. None of the passengers were seriously injured, with the exception of an elderly lady belonging to Portsmouth, whose collar bone was fractured in two places.[119]

The Eastern Stage Company flourished for about twenty years, but with the advent of the railroad, the stage lost favor. The part of the turnpike from Rowley to Lynnfield was sold as a county road in 1849 and the toll-houses sold. The Topsfield Hotel, once the "stage center of Essex County " and in whose "parlors were held many political and social gatherings" went up for sale in 1841 the description read:

> The House is elevated, and is one of the pleasantest situations for a summer residence that can be found, being very airy. The House is three stories high, has a fine hall, and was built expressly for a Public House. Adjoining is a large Stable, sufficient to accommodate 50 or 60 horses over night--together with large Wood Sheds and other out buildings. There are about three acres of first rate Land, on which is about 100 grafted Fruit Trees of selected fruit. One of the finest wells of water, together with an aqueduct that never fails of water. Any person desirous of a Public House, will find the above one of the finest in the country.[120]

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[119] *Salem Gazette*, November 11, 1831.
[120] *Salem Gazette*, June 1, 1841.

Despite the glowing description it was taken down in 1844, moved to the beach at Clifton, and rented as a summer resort. However, the venture was not a financial success and the building was destroyed by fire in 1846.[121] In its place, and still in existence is a house built in 1848 by a locally important builder, Jacob Foster, for Daniel Perkins.

Notices and articles about the pending construction of the railroad through Essex County began to occur frequently, many arguing for the tracks to be laid out through certain areas, and "that the utility of railroads is to connect the interior of a country with seaboard, cannot be denied."[122] The might of the railroad is indicated in maps from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. They do not include the Newburyport Turnpike. In an 1887 travel guide to New England no highways were described; the tourist routes were based on available railroad lines. The length of the trip from Boston to Portland on the Boston and Maine Line was 115 miles with a fare of $3.00.[123]

By the end of the nineteenth century a need for better and more extensive roads had developed in the thickly populated northeastern states. Porter Sargent, an early twentieth century travel writer wrote: "the bicycle, together with a growing appreciation for the open country, [took] the citizens out of the narrow confines of their town to explore the countryside, which resulted in the discovery that good roads paid. The knowledge that bad roads were wasteful of energy had doubtless long been common in the horse world. But hard pedaling over sandy and rutty roads did much to make it comprehensible to human intelligence and bring men to a willingness to pay taxes for good roads."[124] In 1890 New Jersey passed the first state highway law; Massachusetts, New York and other states followed. Massachusetts had the first Highway Commission and inaugurated the policy of having the State financially aid in road building.

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[121]John H. Towne, "Topsfield Houses and Buildings," in *Topsfield Historical Collections*, Vol. VIII (Topsfield, MA, 1902) 19.
[122]*Salem Gazette*, November 17, 1846.
[123] Edmund H. Garrett, Romance *and Reality of the Puritan Coast: With Many Little Picturings Authentic or Fanciful*. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1887).
[124]Porter E. Sargent, *A Handbook of New England* (Boston: Porter E. Sargent, 1917) p. 46.

The extensive development of motor transportation helped bring a new period to the history of the Route One.[125] "Almost from its beginning, the automobile was seen as a pleasure machine, meant to increase social opportunities, to provide adventure and access to nature and, soon, to a whole range of amusements created exclusively by the highway culture."[126] In the early thirties a forty-eight mile strip of U.S. One was found to have nearly 3,000 buildings with direct access to the road. There was a gas station every 895 feet.[127] Topsfield did not suffer from the "supreme honky tonk" roadside culture that a lot of Route One has, but it does retain automotive stations that recall the days of the power of the automobile.

With the Federal Aid Act of 1916 the Federal Government became interested in highways leading to their participation in the financing and construction of roads in all states. One condition of the act was to create state highway departments to cooperate in establishing uniform standards for building roads partly financed by the Government. In 1925 the Old Post Road was named United States Highway One.

Today, Boston Street contains a combination of dwellings, farm buildings, businesses, and various natural features and habitats all contributing to the view shed along Route One. The Newburyport Turnpike breaks from Interstate Route 95 in Danvers and begins its journey up and down the hills of Topsfield to the Ipswich line, a journey of six miles. The driving experience of the two highways is very different. On Interstate 95 the concentration is on the driving itself: speed, lane changing strategy, merging and diverging, signs, mileage, exits, passing cars and watching for police. There is a feeling of detachment from your surroundings completely opposite from the experience of the older highway. The newer roads have a common aesthetic: multi-laned, streamlined, guard rails,

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[125]Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration, U.S. *One: Maine to Florida* (New York: Modern Age Books, Inc. 1938) xv.

[126]Phil Patton, *Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 14.

[127]Phil Patton, *Open Road: A Celebration of the American Highway* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986) 66.

bridges, turnoffs, and green signage. Although some of these new superhighways are visually pleasing and wind through mountains offering terrific views they are not as able to create a link from the driver to the American landscape. In driving north from Boston, travelers are given the choice of the superhighway or the older turnpike. The choice depends on time constraints and the experience desired.

■ CHAPTER FIVE ■
THE RESOURCES OF BOSTON STREET

The following is a preliminary analysis of the resources along Route One. To determine their significance and current status a variety of methods were used: current cadastral, zoning and assessors maps and records; historical maps and atlases; town histories; town building surveys and histories[128]; conversations with Topsfield residents; the author's survey of the road which included video tape and photographing the road through the seasons; and the author's life-long residence and intimate knowledge of the town.

Included are descriptions of the resource, its state of protection and possible policies should it not be protected. The latter determination is based upon the author's study of land protection methods and personal opinion as to the best possible way to protect significant resources.

Danvers Line To Maple Street

The importance of this first stretch of Route One in Topsfield cannot be over emphasized. The mesmerizing climb and descent of the hills is enhanced and framed by the rural landscapes leading the driver from the chaos of Route One south of Topsfield or from Interstate Route 95, into the past, to New England's agricultural roots. The views on this stretch change with the seasons, but are always a welcoming mat for those driving north on Route One and looking for the country town of Topsfield.[129]

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[128]Most of the facts regarding specific historical buildings is from John H. Towne's recollections of "Topsfield's Houses and Buildings" printed in *Topsfield Historical Collections*, Vol. VIII, 1902 and in C. Lawrence Bond, *Houses and Buildings of Topsfield, Massachusetts* (Topsfield, MA: Topsfield Historical Society, 1989).

[129]*Open Space Plan*, Town of Topsfield, 1970.

The drive begins with the ascent up *Rea Farm Hill* named for Israel Rea who was farming the land by the eighteenth century (Figure 1). On the south side of the hill is about 173.36 acres of mainly wooded land with some pastures for horses and stonewalls (Figure 2). The owners should be approached about putting it under Chapter Laws, but development here is probably inevitable. Strong building standards and review processes will help to insure the least disruptive development.

After World War II the Federal Government took by eminent domain nearly all the land between Rea Farm Hill and Witch Hill owned by the Pierce family and established a Nike Base. By the 1970's the Nike Base was no longer needed it and the valley land on the either side of the highway comprising 250.8 acres went to the Salem-Beverly Water Department with the intent to build a reservoir. This land is protected by its intended use, although the town should be interested in how that reservoir is constructed.

The *valley* between Rea Farm Hill and Witch Hill contains spectacular agricultural scenery and natural habitat (Figure 3). It is the habitat the *Golden Wing Warbler*, a Massachusetts State Endangered Species and a pond which feeds Wheel Brook on the east side creating habitat for the *Blandings Turtle* which is on the Massachusetts State Threatened Species List.[130] Although the land will not be developed in the traditional sense, there is the possibility of destruction of these animals' habitat. This large tract is complimented by *97 Boston Street*, a 9 acre lot farmed by Richardson's Farms Incorporated and is temporarily protected through Massachusetts Law Chapter 61A .

At the crest of *Witch Hill* the old growth trees meet the highway's edges contained by a stonewall (Figure 4). From the vantage point of this hill, also known as Peirce Hill, one views horse pastures and Great Hill to the north and to the south open fields interspersed with evergreen and hardwood forest .

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[130]Information regarding the status of the Golden Wing Warbler and Blandings Turtle from Jim MacDougall, Essex County Greenbelt.

Witch Hills' owners have all had local prominence. It came to be known as Witch Hill because the original land owner was William Towne, father of three women accused of witchcraft in 1692. One daughter, Mary Estey, survived the hysteria and her descendants lived in the house (116 Boston Street) until 1821 when the Honorable Benjamin Crowninshield purchased and remodeled the house.

In 1856 Colonel Thomas W. Peirce bought the farm and remodeled the house and grounds into a gentleman's estate (Figures 5-8). Ernest Bowditch landscaped the property (Figure 9-10). Peirce also had built the farm house (c.1870) across the highway at what is now *111 Boston Street* (Figures 11). The properties are owned separately today, although they should be regarded in their original context, that of a prosperous nineteenth estate nestled in the valley between Witch and Pingree's Hill. Resources of the two properties include the mansard roof mansion house, farm house, barns and other outbuildings, stonewalls, fences and 27.3 acres of pasture and woods (Figure 12). The land should be under Chapter Law 61A and the owners should be approached about placing the buildings and land under easement.

130 Boston Street comprises 66.51 acres of forest land with stonewalls along the turnpike edge. It is currently under Massachusetts Law, Chapter 61B (Figure 13).

The *Ebenezer Peabody Farm House* (1852) is located at 79 Salem Road and within the winter view shed. The original barn was struck by lightening and destroyed by fire in 1890, but was rebuilt shortly after. The current owner has renovated the farm with care and may agree to a preservation restriction.

The turnpike *toll-house* once stood at the Salem Road crossing (Figure 14). Currently, the crest of *Wheatland's* or *Pingree's Hill* contains a view shed that overlooks the village of Topsfield (Figure 15). In the winter months the steeple of the Congregational Church can be seen as well as the Ipswich River, farm houses and agricultural lands in the valley to the west of the highway (Figures 16-17). Also during the winter Wheatland's Hill, a 13.8 acre sloping lot, becomes the town's sledding hill. It is of extreme importance

to the scenic and recreational quality of life in Topsfield. It is under Massachusetts Law Chapter 61B and the current owner has agreed to lease it to the Town for one dollar. However, it is such an important location for its scenic view shed a more permanent restriction should be considered such as the Hillside/Slope Overlay Zone and if necessary the land should be taken by eminent domain.

The *John Balch House* (pre-1769), the *Captain Thomas Perkins House* (1806), the *Asa Pingree Farm House* (1836-37), and the *Moses Bradstreet House* (1875) can all be seen from the turnpike. These houses represent various building styles in Topsfield's architectural history. The Balch House (1 Hill Street) is a two story connected farm house located and was in the same family until 1954 (Figures 18-19). Captain Perkins was an eminent Salem merchant and built a two story hipped roof house with 'widow's walk' overlooking Ipswich River valley (49 Salem Road). The present carriage-house on the property was built in 1850 of stone from Crooked Pond replacing the chaise-house which was destroyed by fire in 1849 (Figures 20-21). The Asa Pingree House (45 Salem Road) was built as farm house to the Perkins estate next door. The Moses Bradstreet House (17 Bradstreet Lane) contains 88.4 acres of farmland and became part of Meredith Farms in 1956, an experimental farm. The property owners should be approached about preservation restrictions. The Bradstreet property is currently under Chapter Law 61B.

The two and a half story *Marsh House* (1910) located at 153 Boston Street, is situated on northerly crest of Pingree's Hill with an expansive view northeast. The mainly wooded 74 acres runs downhill to the Ipswich River. There is still visible a turnpike entrance, but it now is accessed from Salem Road, the driveway lined with open fields and stonewall. It is within the winter view shed and is currently under Massachusetts Law Chapter 61B.

The *Ipswich River* intersects Route One at the bottom of Wheatland's Hill. The river is a vital natural, scenic and recreational resource to Topsfield. It is protected by the Ipswich River Protection District. Paraphrased, the ordinance reads:

> The district is comprised of land 200 feet on each side of the bank of the Ipswich River and is an area which requires preservation and protection for the health, safety and welfare of the Town of Topsfield. The area is important to the public good for purposes of flood control, the preservation of clean air and water supplies, and the preservation of scenic and natural wildlife habitat areas. No new buildings are allowed in the protected area.[131]

The Ipswich River was bridged where the Newburyport Turnpike was built in 1803. The original bridge, known as *Turnpike Bridge* has seen many improvements. The wooden bridge was washed away and rebuilt in 1811 and 1837. In 1853 it was rebuilt with stone and when the turnpike was widened (date unknown) the bridge became encased in cement.

On the flat plain extending north from the Ipswich River on the west side of the highway (*180 Boston Street*) are 11.5 acres of wetlands. It is protected by Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Law and Topsfield's Flood Plain District Zoning Bylaw which protects all land subject to seasonal or periodic flooding and prevents building on all land within a 100-year base flood elevation.[132] The land is currently under Massachusetts Law Chapter 61B.

The *Topsfield Fairgrounds*, located at 207 Boston Street comprise 63.75 acres constituting of vitally important cultural, historical, recreational and scenic resources. The Essex Agricultural Society was founded in 1818 and in 1857 Dr. James G. Treadwell left his property in trust to be used for agricultural purposes. This property is now the fairgrounds. By 1921 the Essex Agricultural Society had built an exhibition hall on the area east of the turnpike and soon after proceeded to build additional animal barns including a barn for draft horses and a stable for race horses and a dance hall, grand stand, 4-H buildings and most recently the Coolidge building, donated by William A. Coolidge (Figure 22). During the second quarter of the nineteenth century the Agricultural Society

[131]Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts, Article VIII: Ipswich River Protection District.
[132]Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Topsfield, Massachusetts, Article VI: Flood Plain Districts.

held its annual meetings at the Topsfield Hotel, further north up the Turnpike. The fair takes place during the fall, but the grounds are utilized for craft fairs, farmers markets, antique shows, car shows etc. and during the winter months the field near the Ipswich River floods and becomes a town skating rink. The property is forever protected by a trust set up by Treadwell and the Essex Agricultural Society. It is a landmark in Essex County and perhaps in Massachusetts as well.

Topsfield's agricultural heritage is further protected by the *Essex County Cooperative Society* on the western side of the highway opposite the fairgrounds (144 South Main Street). The Essex Agricultural Society, once Dr. John Treadwell's property, used the land as an experimental farm. The large barn was built by the Society in 1859 by J.H. Potter. Today the property and buildings are run by the Essex County Agricultural Cooperative Society, formed after World War I with the idea that farm machinery could be purchased and rented to members. Today, the locally famous yellow barns and store are contained in 10.32 acres and present an important cultural and historical resource for Topsfield (Figure 23). Town recycling takes place on the property. It is currently under no threat, protected by its success as a farm and supply store.

The *State Police Barracks* (1934-35) are the only example of public colonial revival building along the highway (210 Boston Street). Owned by the town it is now used by the Topsfield Police Department (Figure 24). Also on the west side of the highway, the Lower Cemetery was accepted in 1834 (216 Boston Street). The 1.15 acres are also known as the *Boston Street Cemetery* (Figure 25).

Just beyond the Cemetery are the now abandoned *rail road tracks* (Figure 26). There is potential here to develop a 'rails to trails' program which could connect the two sides of the highway. The tracks run to the Massachusetts Audubon Sanctuary which owns 820.97 in Topsfield.

Maple Street to High Street

This section of the highway's most obvious visual character stems from the rise of the automobile. The earliest existing gas station *Nangle's Garage*, dates to 1920 and is still owned by the original family. Many signs of early car and road culture have disappeared such as the Clipper Ship restaurant built after World War II at what is now 288 Boston Street. When Interstate 95 was constructed the restaurant lost business and was torn down. At 130 Central Street is the *Jacob Perkins House* (by 1768). It is within the view shed of Route One (Figure 27).

This section of the road would benefit from design guidelines and incentives to enhance existing construction.

High Street to Topsfield Road

This one mile stretch climbs two hills, *Towne and Great Hill.* It contains dwelling houses from all four centuries of Topsfield's building history. The road is lined with stonewalls and deciduous trees giving a varied view shed depending on the season (Figure 28). The northwestern slope of Great Hill contains a large stand of maple trees contributing to fall foliage.

At 78 High Street once stood the Topsfield Hotel, built in 1803-04 for the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike Corporation (Figure 29). The *Perkins/Gleasons House* replaced it in 1848 (Figure 30). Locally it is known as history house (Figures 31-32). The owners should be approached about an easement.

The *Oliver Thayer House* (1899-1900) located at 268 Boston Street is known today as the Atwood House (Figure 33). Originally built by Pitman and Brown of Salem and moved by Fred F. Atwood in 1969 (Figure 34).

To the eastern side of the highway as the road nears the crest of Great Hill once stood *Barrack Tor/Pentecost/Maryknoll House* (1903), a brick mansion built for Marion Pierce (279 Boston Street). She married Captain Ernest Harvey Pentecost, R.N.R.

Around 1960 the property was sold to the Sisters of St. Dominic who renamed the site Maryknoll. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts acquired the house in 1968 to be used for the Youth Services Department, but septic system problems, fire damage and other deterioration led to its destruction in 1984. The entrance gates remain but the land has reverted to woodland (Figure 35). Topsfield now owns the 19.1 acres.

Just after the Maryknoll property is *293 Boston Street* comprising 108.59 acres (Figure 36). Although the property is currently under Chapter 61B, it probably will be developed as have most of the owner's other land holdings in Topsfield. Design guidelines that ensure the least number of trees are to be removed to preserve the view south looking up at Great Hill should be enforced. Opposite this parcel is *71 Howlett Street* comprising 27.6 acres. The owners should be approached about putting the land under Chapter Law 61B.

Where the turnpike crosses over Howlett Street is the *Dry Bridge* first constructed in 1805 (Figure 37). At 86 Howlett Street on the eastern side of the bridge one can see the *French/Andrews House* (1675), a National Register Individual Property and in the National Register Thematic Resource Area (Figures 38-39).

At the crest of *Great Hill* is a 149.9 acres of undeveloped land (1 Ipswich Road). Because the slope of the hill faces north there is a large native stand of maple trees which contribute the autumn view shed (Figure 40). Recently plans for development of the land as an exclusive retirement community has been proposed. Topsfield's Zoning Board and Conservation Commission have had a lot of input on the design and hopefully the siting will remain sensitive to the location and the potential interruption of the fall foliage view shed.

Topsfield Road to the Ipswich Line

This last section of the highway in Topsfield has a combination of commercial, industrial, residential and recreational land use. Where Ipswich Road crosses the turnpike

there are two automotive stations. It is now known as Parsons Corner, but traditionally was *'Shoemaker's Corner.'* The *John H. Towne Carriage House* (1886) built by John H. Porter remains originally facing Ipswich Road. In 1903 it was sold to C. Harry Shoemaker and remodeled.

Klock Park, comprising 18.9 acres are town owned sports and recreational fields, interrupts the mix of commercial buildings and single family dwellings. *Howlett Brook* crosses the highway at about 440 Boston Street. The brook falls under the Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife category of a spawning river for native brook trout. Nearby is an industrial park's parking lot and a retaining pond to hold the runoff. However the brook is still being contaminated by the runoff. The industrial park needs to plant trees around the pond. Another suggestion to protect the brook is to incorporate a setback and no cut policy along the brook.

The *Asa W. Wildes Farm House* was moved from Newburyport when the turnpike was constructed in 1805. It was bought by Warren and George Tilton in 1879 and together with the *Joseph W. Rust House* (1845) is still owned by their descendants. The property contains barns and other outbuildings (Figures 41-42). On the opposite side of the highway (east) is the *Meadowview Golf Course* comprising 34.6 acres along the turnpike and under Chapter Law 61A. The Ipswich line begins at the edge of the golf course.

The American landscape resonates with a sense of change: history, innovation, and natural beauty, inviting travel to experience these qualities. Driving Route One is a multi-sensory act evoking a sense of time and place through agricultural, recreational, river, forest, residential and commercial landscapes. A continuum is formed as the driver passes features; separating and combining them to create physical and mental visions of culture and history which link the particular to the universal.

The historic preservation and land conservation movements came about because of concern that, "buildings, structures, and landscapes are under siege almost everywhere from new development, changes in agricultural practice, and shifts in the economy."[133] The landscape's resources and human activities are what give our communities their special identity. Each area has groups of buildings and landscapes its residents consider important because they are pleasant to look at, because they have been an integral part of a way of life, or because they evoke familiar and comforting associations of family and community. No matter how important such resources as prime agricultural soil, clean water, and wildlife habitat may be, for the general public they rarely have the emotional appeal of a countryside setting. Although the "preferred" landscape setting often includes environmental aspects which optimize the requirements needed for life to flourish, a love for scenic beauty often provides the common bond among people who work for the protection of wetlands, historic houses, and farmland.[134][135]

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[133]Samuel N. Stokes, "America's Rural Heritage," in *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, Antoinette J. Lee, ed., (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1992) 197.
[134]Kaplan, Rachel and Stephen Kaplan, *Experience of Nature: A Psychological Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[135]Samuel N. Stokes and A. Elizabeth Watson, *Saving America's Countryside: A Guide to Rural Conservation* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989) 37-38 and 42-43.

The first half of the report described the many goals of various scenic byway programs. Special emphasis was given to the Federal Scenic Byway Program and explanation of growth management tools possibly employed in a corridor management plan, which the program requires. Under the Federal Program's outline, the corridor management process has the potential to foster positive relationships between various interest groups that have a stake in the road. In the author's opinion, this potential is one of the most important aspects of the program. The opportunity to unite governmental entities, private landowners, tourism officials, road users, land owners, industrialists, builders and developers, historic preservationists, and conservationists and new players in preservation, is really an attempt to bring together those who struggle for "quality of life" causes such as scenic beauty, biological diversity, outdoor recreation.[136]

Preservationists and conservationists need to recognize and strengthen their interdependence, they need to collaborate. Natural habitat and human habitat is being threatened, wetlands, forests, farmlands, historic buildings and archaeological sites are all being eroded by the same forces. We are losing both biological and cultural diversity. Preservationists must realize that the built environment is linked to the forces of nature. Conservationists recognize that man is part of nature and, at his best, can complement, even enhance, the natural environment. At a grass roots level it makes more sense to approach important places holistically, preservationists and environmentalists bear the burden of proving that irreplaceable natural and cultural resources are worth conserving Zoning, easements, environmental impact statements, resource inventories bargain sales and revolving funds - the language, the law, and the issues are the same.[137]

Chapter's Three and Four are the facts about Topsfield and Route One, necessary to understanding the history that has created the Topsfield of today, and more specifically, the

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[136]Jerry L. Rogers, "Defining Who We Are" in *Past Meets Future: Saving America's Historic Environments*, Editor Antoinette J. Lee (The Preservation Press, Washington, D.C., 1992) 27.
[137]"In Search of Collaboration: Historic Preservation and the Environmental Movement" (Washington, D.C.: National Trust Information Series No. 71, 1992).

role the highway has played in shaping the town. Community character and scenic landscapes are almost intangible, made up of many elements and often not discovered or understood until gone or pieces are lost. In Chapter Five, the author has combined knowledge, impressions and opinions stemming from a lifelong residency in Topsfield with current research and historic documentation to develop a resource inventory of the turnpike. It is an attempt to put the intangibles into words, place value on them, and take potential actions to protect them.

The main thrust of this section, determination of the significance of their resources and how to protect them, is based on the author's personal experience and impressions of the landscapes and community of Topsfield, Massachusetts. These findings are an initial attempt to use historic preservation planning for Topsfield, with the awareness that there is still more research to be done and other opinions to hear and incorporate.

The southern end of the Newburyport Turnpike retains the impression of Topsfield's agricultural heritage beginning with the valleys of pasture, crop fields and farm buildings between Rea Farm Hill, Witch Hill and Wheatland's Hill down to the Essex County Cooperative buildings and the Topsfield Fairground ending with the cemetery at Maple Street. The Ipswich River also intersects the highway on this stretch. It contains the highest concentration and most exemplary of the six necessary resources required by the Federal Scenic Byway Program. Protection of these view sheds should be a priority, and a strong thrust made to educate the land owners to the benefits of easement programs and the "Chapter Laws".

The relatively flat stretch from Maple Street to High Street has been affected by the automobile industry with the earliest automotive building constructed in 1920. Currently, most of this section is detracting from the scenic character of the highway. By educating land owners to the benefits of view shed improvement and the opportunities of funding and technical aid from ISTEA, land owners may be encouraged to improve views.

At High Street the highway climbs up to Town Hill and then to Great Hill, forested on either side. The west side of the highway faces north and contains a large stand of sugar maples. The dwellings within the view shed along this corridor span all four centuries of Topsfield's history. Spectacular fall views of Great Hill from hills north and south give a sense of a healthy natural environment. The remaining open spaces will inevitably be developed. By reviewing and strengthening existing subdivision policies and design guidelines the town can prepare itself for the careful monitoring of plans .

At the bottom of Great Hill, Topsfield Road intersects the highway and on this flatter stretch to the Ipswich line, commerce and industry have sprouted, although this section is interspersed with dwellings and recreational facilities. This is also another location for education for landowners of enhancing existing design and to encourage better unity of the recreational, commercial and residential aspects of this section of the road.

Route One embodies American culture. Its 2,467.7 miles stretch from northern Maine to Key West, Florida passing through old weathered towns of New England, through the great decaying cities of the Eastern seaboard, through the farms of the old South, down through Florida. A ride down what historian Andrew H. Malcolm calls "America's Original Mainstreet" shows us our past, our present, and some progress has done to those values Americans' once held dear.

For Topsfield, during the turn-of-the-nineteenth century, the turnpike's passage through its borders meant increased prosperity and connection with major cities. Time and time again, advertisements for the Topsfield Hotel promised clean country air and beautiful views. When the railroad came, the turnpike took a back seat for half a century, but with the rise of the automobile in the early twentieth century the road received new life.

There is a freedom and sense of pride in America that one feels when coasting down the hills of Topsfield. For many Topsfield residents, it is a freedom to enjoy the blessings of the American landscape. These blessings are in jeopardy from development pressures. Just over the Danvers line is the encroaching metropolis of Boston. Hopefully,

this study will make people aware of the small details of scenery, and how they contribute to the larger context. It is also hoped that the study will contribute to the understanding of the another reality of the American environment - freedom to do what ever you want with your land, but doing so responsibly with your community in mind. If Topsfield can make the connection that its high real estate values come from the healthfulness and natural beauty of the town, than it will realize it needs to protect its resources.

Residents are enjoying a delightful combination of its nearly two centuries of history, but they need to recognize why they live where they live and, that without careful management, what they cherish will be gone. The Boston metropolis, and the development pressure, that follow it, are slowly making their way north. If Topsfield can tangibly define its special sense of place, reflected in architectural character, history and development style, and natural environment, it can set up a framework for protection and management of development sensitive to its unique heritage and environment.

Endorsement of growth should occur when and where it improves things, not where it is destructive or exceeds the carrying capacity of the natural environment or the limits of the social environment, beyond which the quality of community life is adversely affected. The Federal Scenic Byway Program is an attempt to set up a framework for seeing resources holistically and unite the various interests groups in developing a corridor management plan that will achieve results for all their goals. The label of "Federal Scenic Byway" or "All-American Road" is really a bonus; it should not be the goal. The goal should be to make the townspeople aware of their resources, aware that the federal program can provide the guidance and funding for communities and states to produce a comprehensive management ideology. Hopefully, as citizens and groups interested in protecting our cultural and natural environments read this study, a coalition of interested individuals and institutions will be created to build and work together to protect Topsfield's heritage. Other towns along Route One might follow Topsfield's example and link the towns together, protecting an even longer corridor.

Landscape historian, J. B. Jackson, wrote: "the street is a direct link between the private domain - home or place of work - and the life of the town."[138] The landscape itself, however viewed, is as much part of the heritage as the more obvious monuments and sites. Conservationist Aldo Leopold wrote: "we abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."[139] Combination of these two sentiments means respectfully living with our environment. Management of the road's resources means working out ways to accommodate growth and deciding where and how much growth the community wants. It is not a matter of elimination, but rather location, density, and appearance allowing communities all the benefits of the resources of the road without compromising the attributes that make them special.

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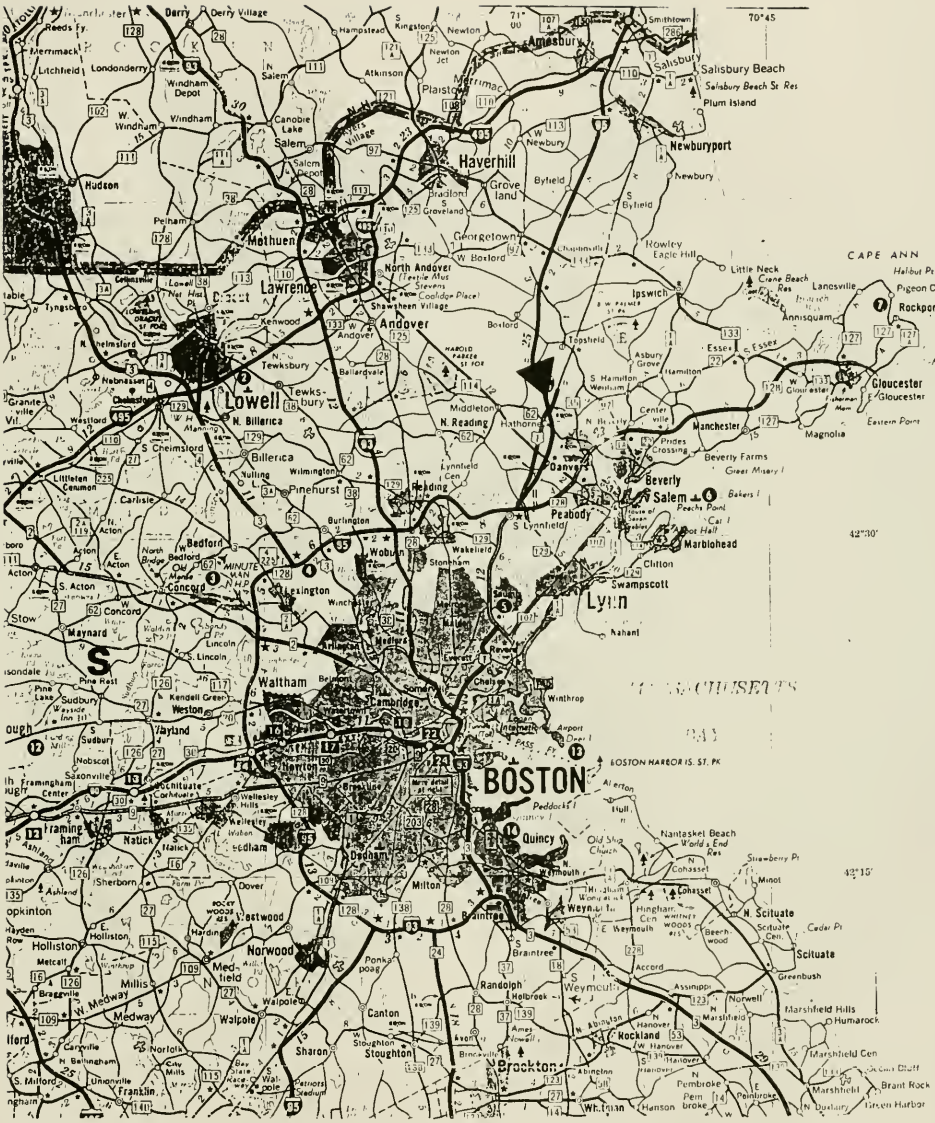
[138]John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984).

[139]Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac: And Sketches Here and There* (NY, NY: Oxford University Press, 1949) viii.

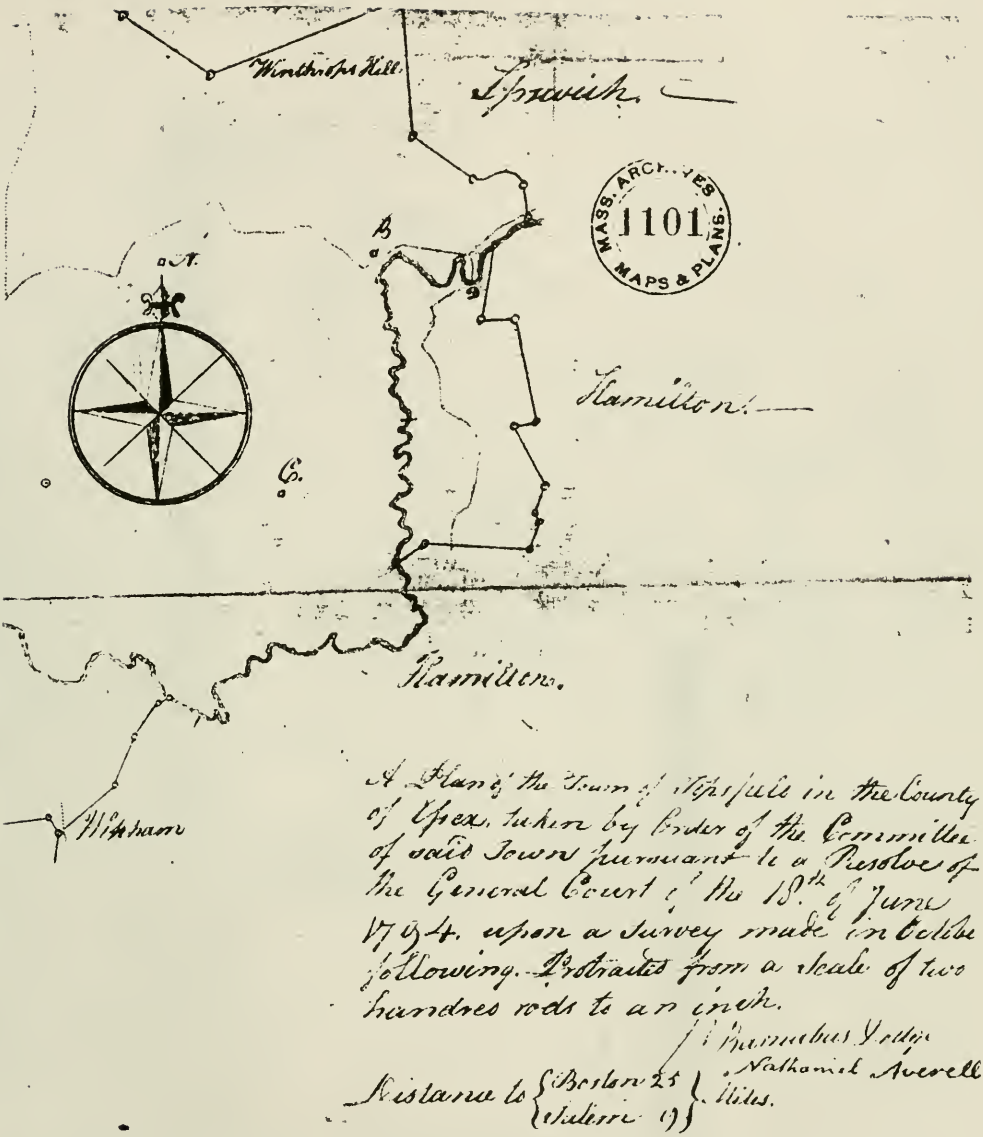
■ APPENDIX A: MAPS ■



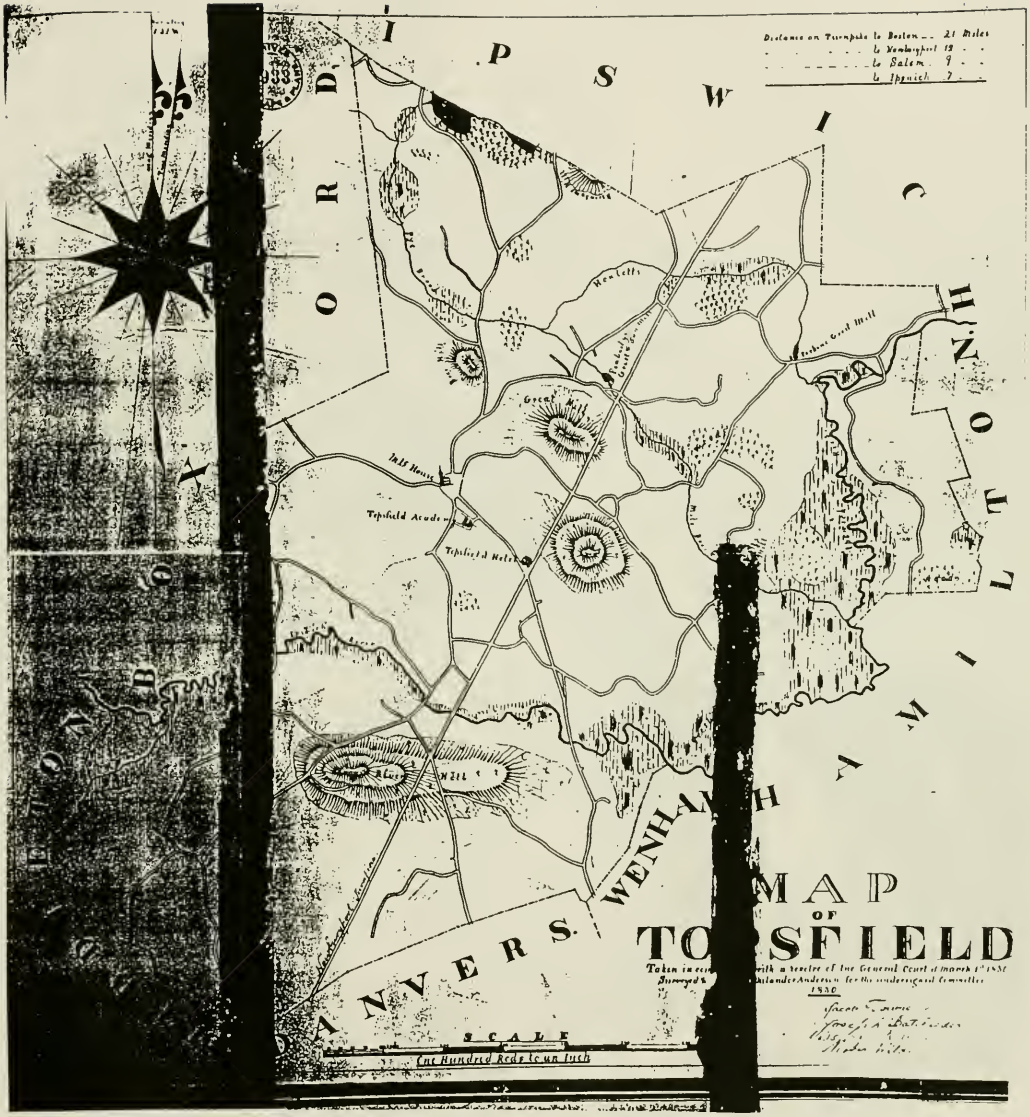
Map 1. Exxon, Inc., *Map of New England.* Convent Station, NJ: General Drafting, Co., Inc., MCMLXXXIV.

Map 2. Ipswich, Massachusetts, *U.S. Geological Survey*, 42070-F7-TM-025, 1985.
Salem, Massachusetts, *U.S. Geological Survey*, 42070-F7-TM-025, 1985.

Map 3. L. Bergsten. *Map of Ancient Topsfield, County of Essex, Massachusetts Bay Colony: Proximity of Earliest Land Grants and Holdings, Known Earlier as Shenewemedy and New Meadows.* Topsfield, MA, 1977.


Winthrops Hill
Ipswich
MASS. ARCHIVES
1101
MAPS & PLANS
Hamilton
Hamilton
Wenham
A Plan of the Town of Topsfield in the County of Essex, taken by Order of the Committee of said Town pursuant to a Resolve of the General Court of the 18th of June 1794 upon survey made in October following. Protracted from a scale of two hundred rods to an inch.
Nathaniel Averell
Distance to Boston 25 miles
Salem 19

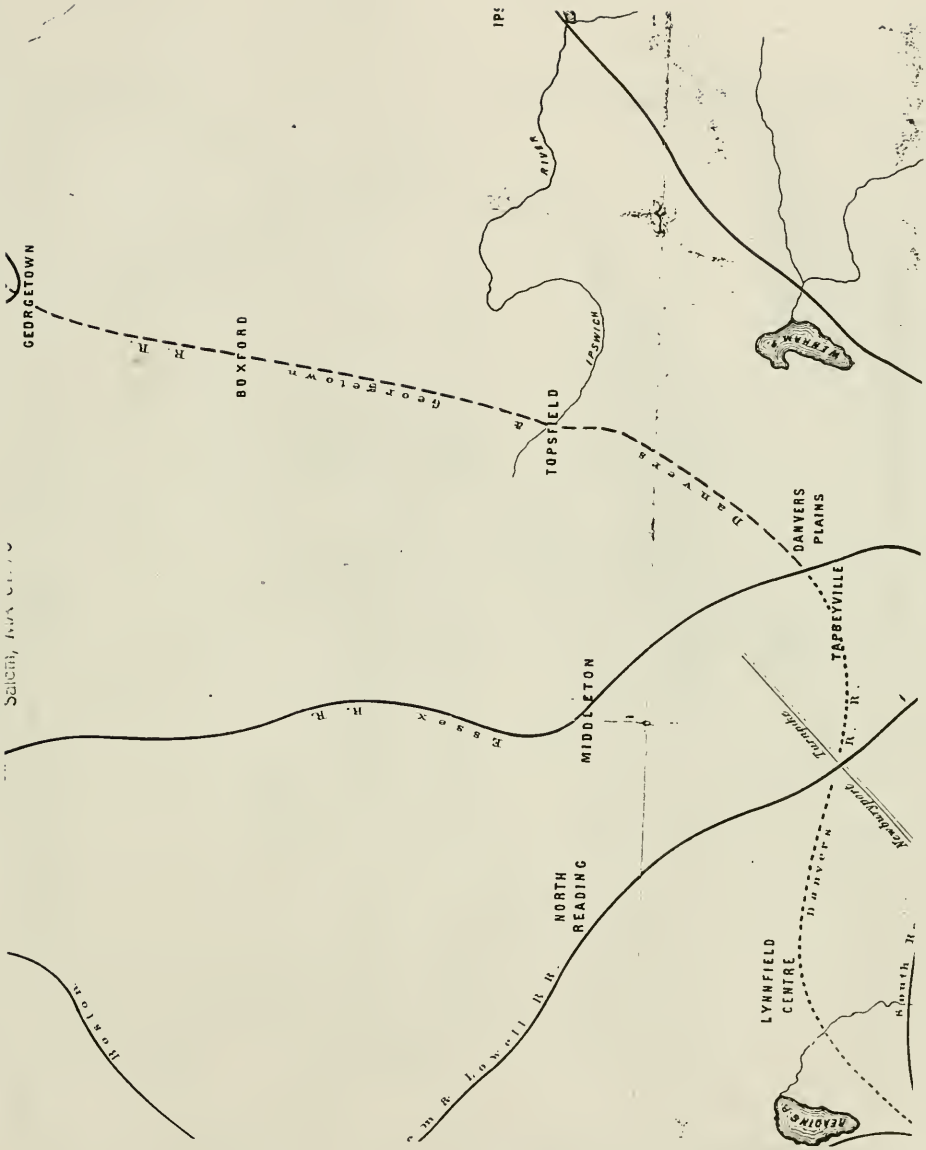
Map 4. *A Plan of the Town of Topsfield in the County of Essex, taken by Order of the Committee of said Town pursuant to a Resolve of the General Court of the 18th of June 1794 upon survey made in October following.* In collection of Topsfield Historical Society.



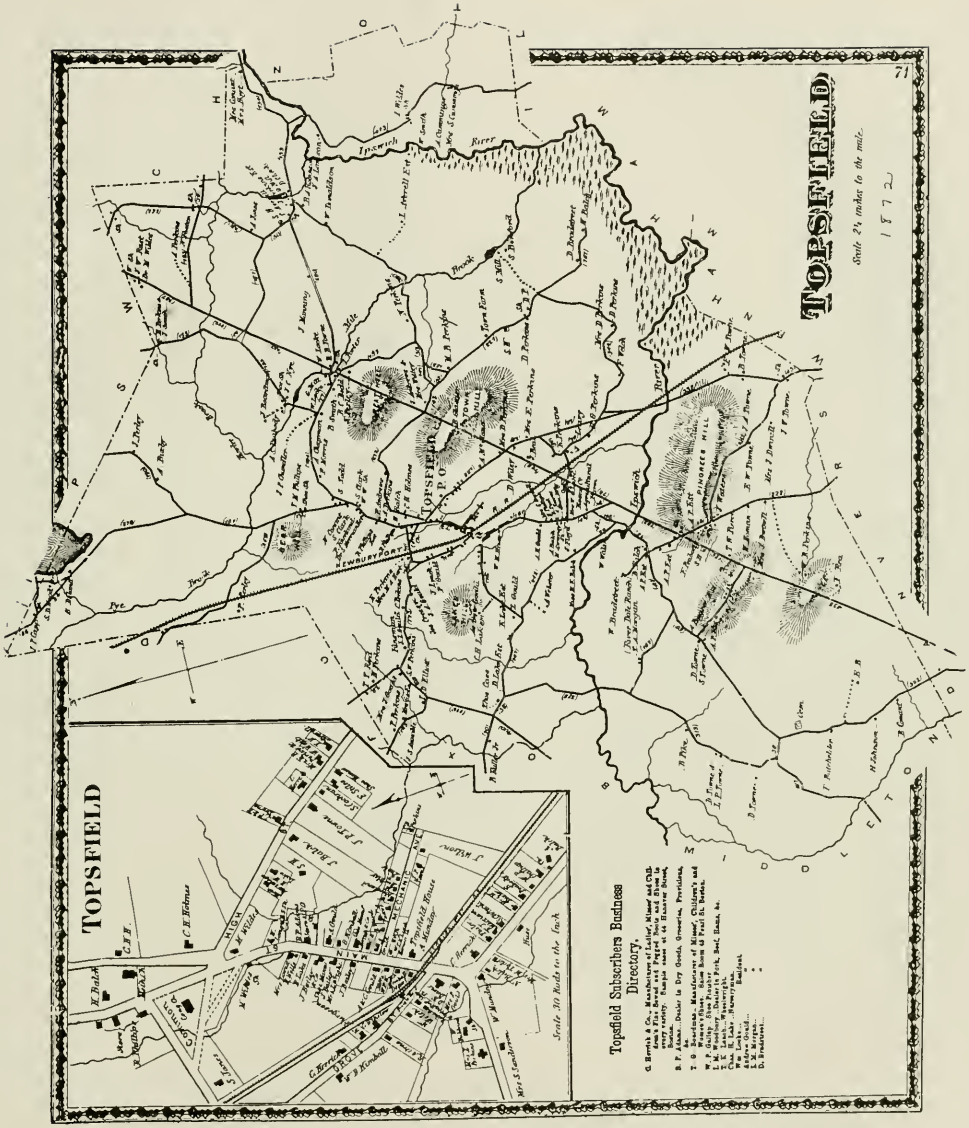
Map 5. Philander Anderson, *Map of Topsfield, 1830.* In collection of Topsfield Historical Society.

Map 6. Andrus and Judd. *Atlas of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.* Hartford: 1834.

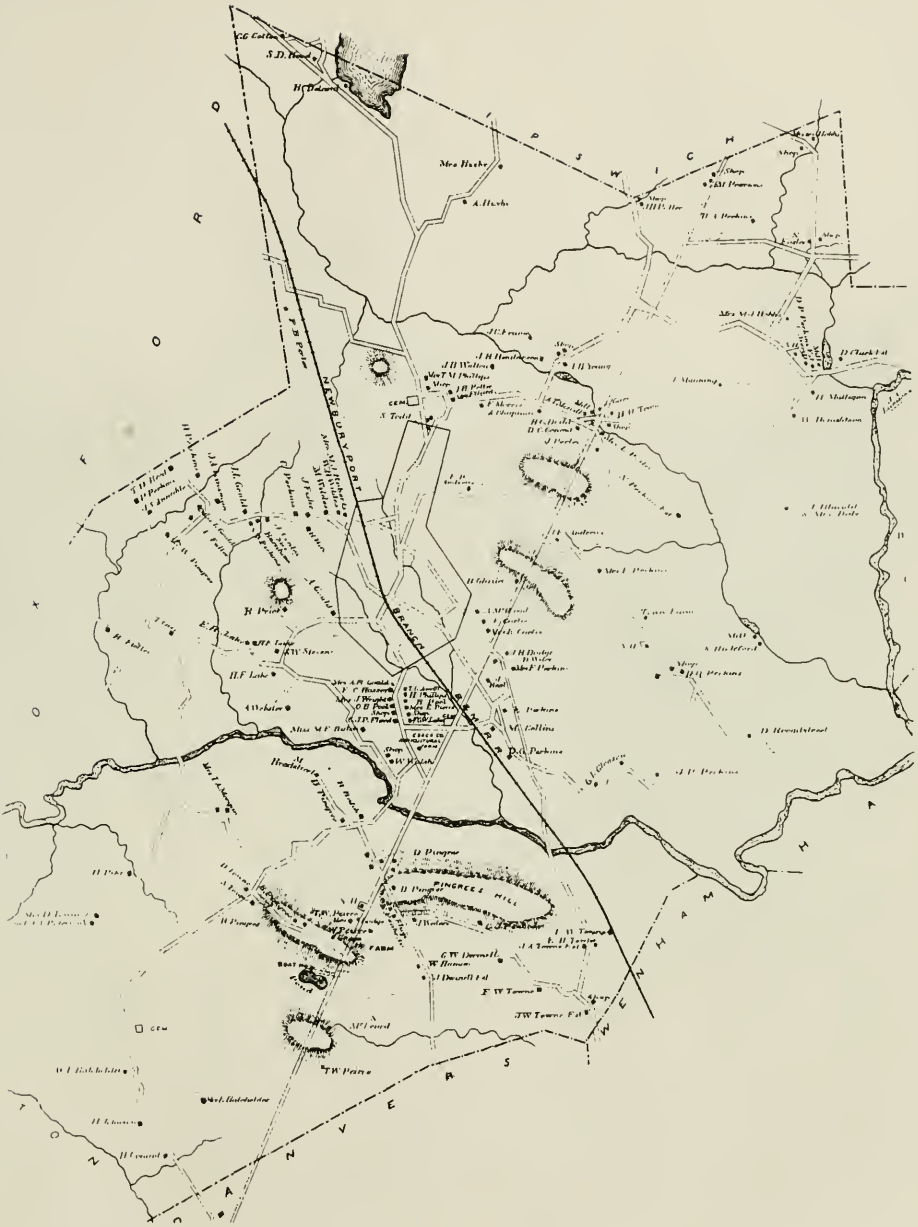
Map 7. J.G. Carter, *A Map of Essex County.* Boston: Carter and Hendee, 183_.



Map 8. J.N. Cunningham, *Map of Parts of Essex and Middlesex Counties*. Boston, 1852.

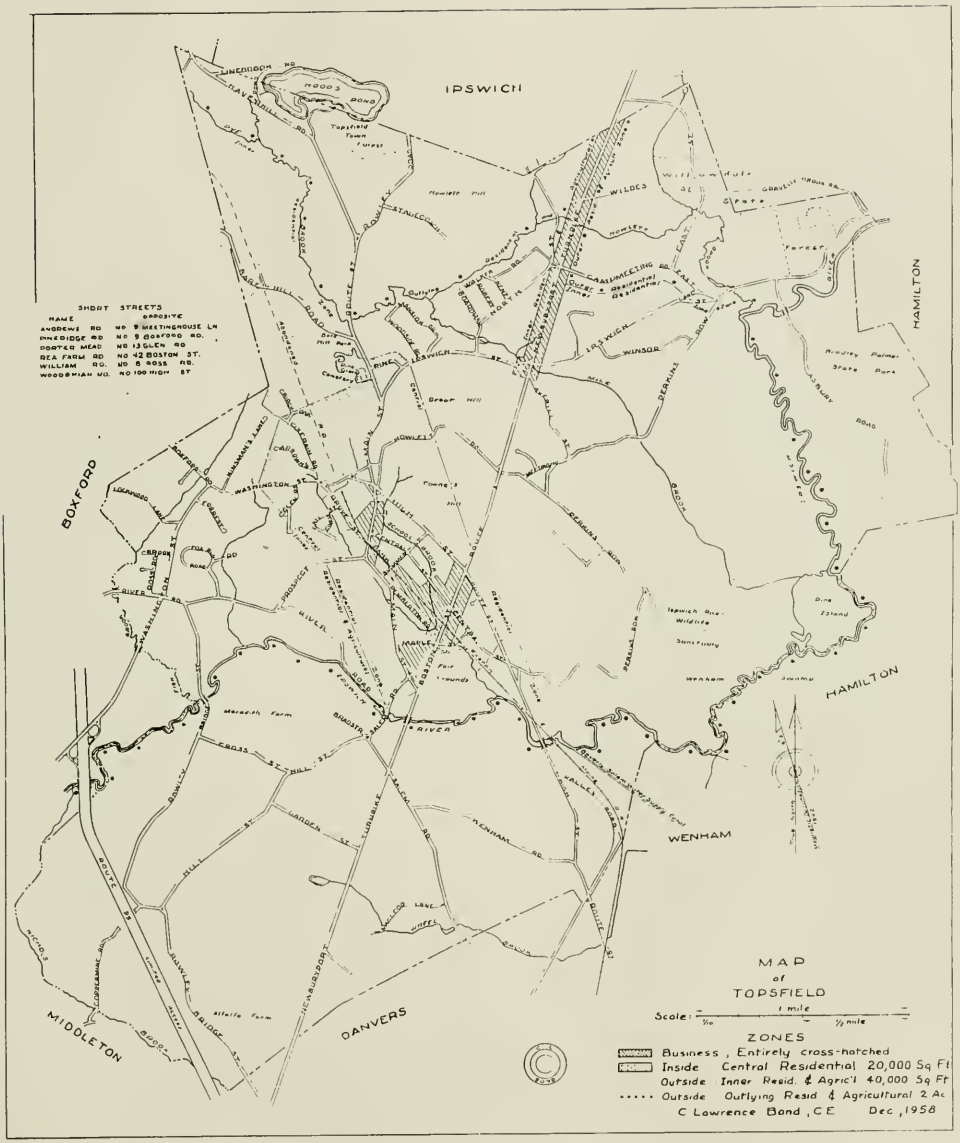


Map 9. George Walker, *Atlas of Essex County, Massachusetts*. Boston, MA, 1872.



Map 10. *Atlas of the Towns of Ipswich, Essex, Hamilton and Wenham, Essex County, MA.* Boston, MA: Walker Lithograph and Publishing Co., 1884.

Map 11. Bradley, William M. *Atlas of Massachusetts*. Boston: 1887.



Map 12. C. Lawrence Bond, *Map of Topsfield.* Topsfield, MA, 1958.

■ APPENDIX B: ILLUSTRATIONS ■

Figure 1. The beginning of Route One in Topsfield at the Danvers line looking north. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 2. The peak of Rea Farm Hill looking north. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 3. The valley between Rea Farm Hill and Witch Hill. Home of the Golden Wing Warbler and Blandings Turtle. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 4. The peak of Witch Hill looking south. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 5. 116 Boston Street. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 6. 116 Boston Street (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 7. 116 Boston Street. Entrance to Peirce Estate looking south. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 8. Witch Hill looking north at the entrance of Peirce Estate. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

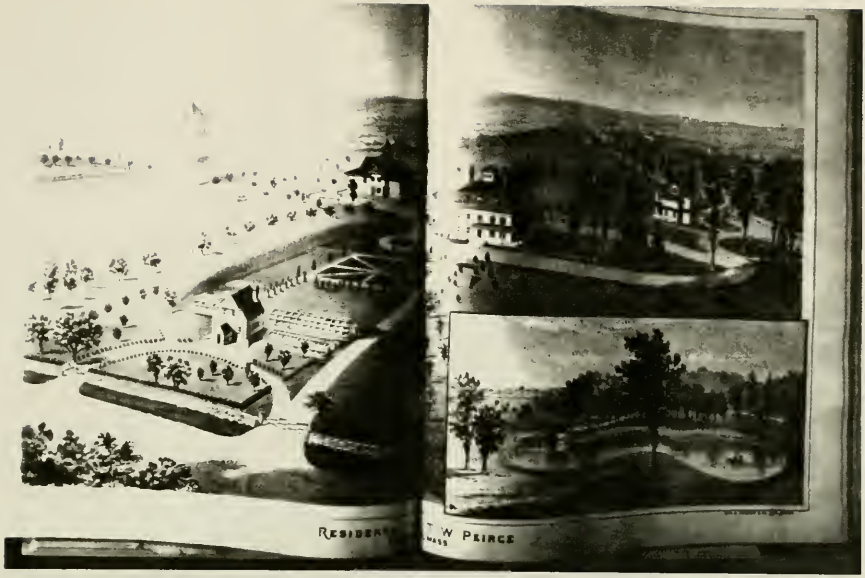


Figure 9. 116 Boston Street.. Ernest Bowditch plan for Col. Thomas Peirce Estate. *Walker Atlas of Essex County*, Boston, 1884. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 10. 111 Boston Street. Ernest Bowditch plan for theCol. Thomas Peirce Farm. *Walker Atlas of Essex County*, Boston, 1884. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 11. 111 Boston Street. Col. Thomas Peirce Farm. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 12 Witch Hill. (Author's photograph, 1993)

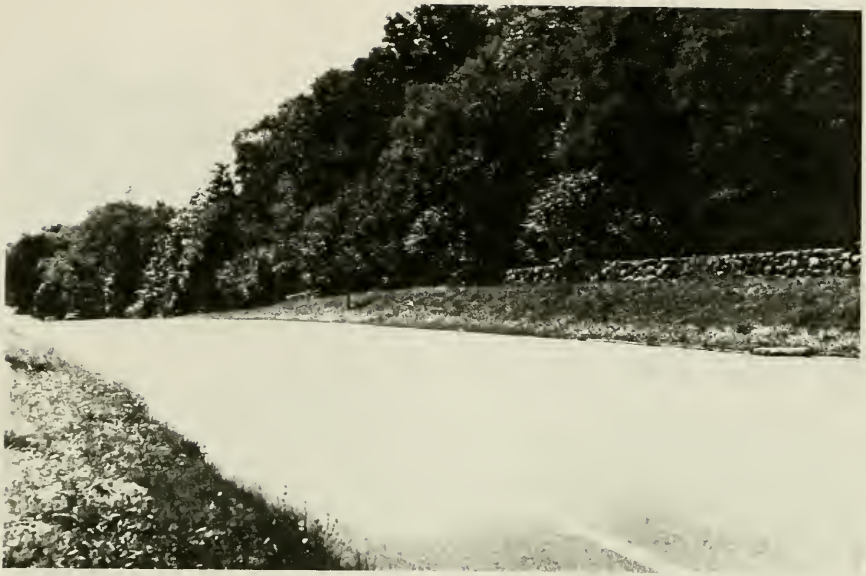


Figure 13. 130 Boston Street. Looking southeast from Salem Road crossing. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 14. "The Toll-House on the Turnpike built in 1804." At Salem Road crossing. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

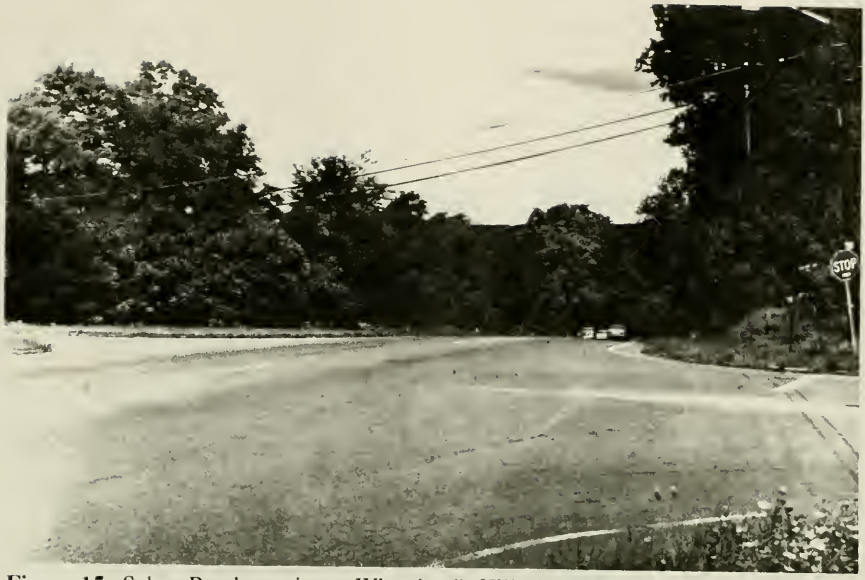


Figure 15. Salem Road crossing at Wheatland's Hill. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 16. Wheatland's sledding hill. (Author's photograph, 1994)

Figure 17. Detail of Wheatland's sledding hill. (Author's photograph, 1994)

Figure 18. 1 Hill Street. John Balch House. 1910. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 19. 1 Hill Street. John Balch House. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 20. 49 Salem Road. Captain Thomas Perkins House. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 21. 49 Salem Road. Capt. Thomas Perkins House. (Author's photograph, 1993)

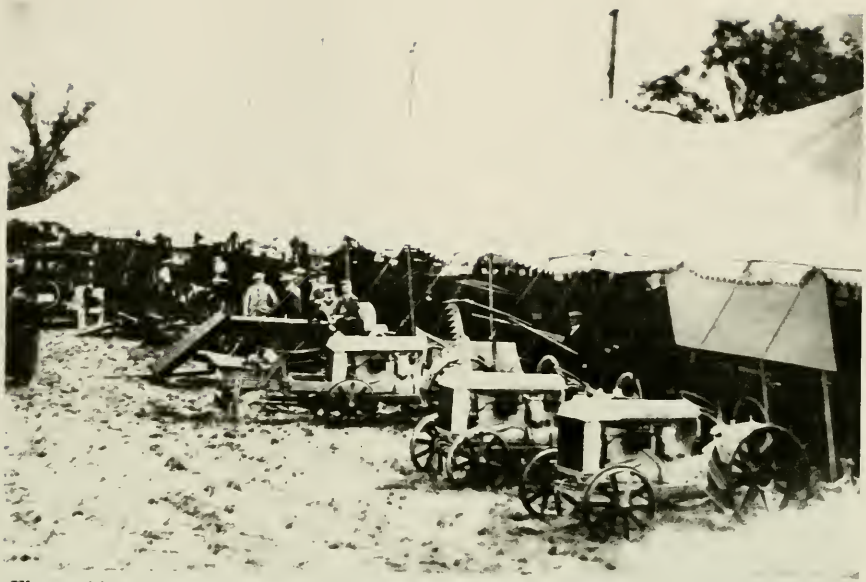


Figure 22. 207 Boston Street. Topsfield Fairgrounds. 1929. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 23. 144 S. Main Street. Essex County Cooperative. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 24. 210 Boston Street. State Police Barracks. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 25. 216 Boston Street. The Lower or Boston Street Cemetery. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 26. Railroad Crossing. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 27. 130 Central Street. Jacob Perkins House. (Author's photograph, 1994)

Figure 28. High Street intersection looking south. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 29. 78 High Street. Topsfield Hotel. 1835-40. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 30. 78 High Street. Perkins/Gleason. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 31. 78 High Street. Perkins/Gleason. (Author's photograph, 1994)

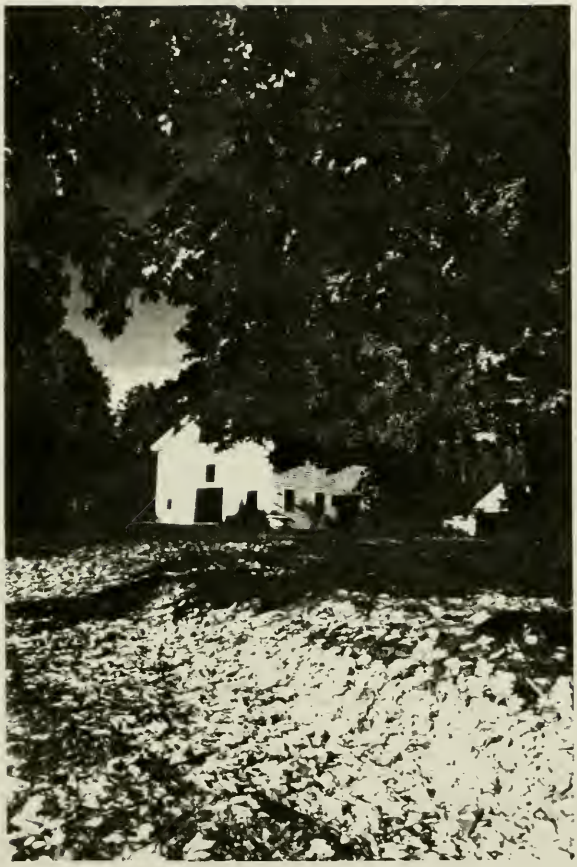


Figure 32. 78 High Street. Perkins/Gleason or "History House" barns. (Author's photograph, 1994)

Figure 33. 268 Boston Street. Oliver Thayer or "Atwood" House. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 34. 268 Boston Street. Oliver Thayer or "Atwood" House. (Author's photograph, 1993)

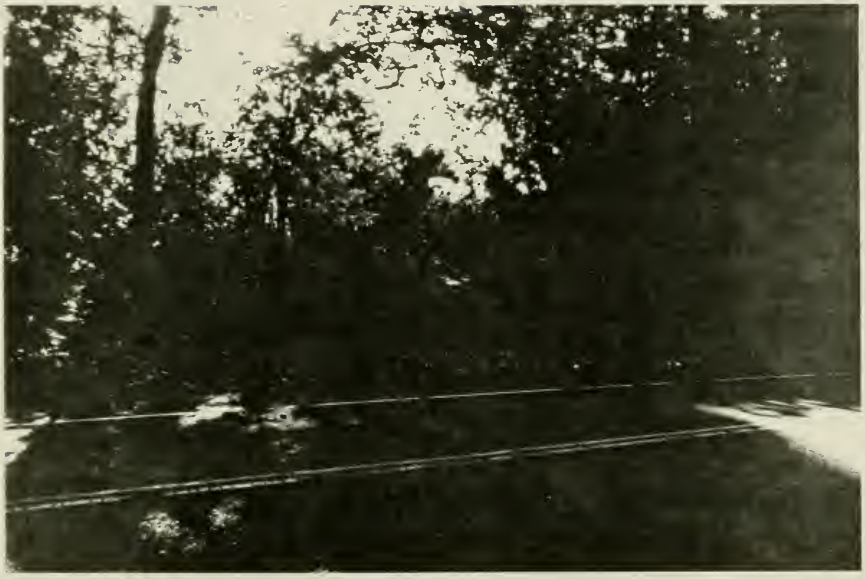


Figure 35. 279 Boston Street. Entrance to Barrack Tor/Pentecost/Maryknoll House. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 36. 293 Boston Street. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 37. Dry Bridge at Howlett Street. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 38. 86 Howlett Street. French/Andrews House. 1900. (Essex Institute, Salem, MA)

Figure 39. 86 Howlett Street. French/Andrews House. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 40. 1 Ipswich Road. Great Hill. (Author's photograph, 1993)

Figure 41. 488-490 Boston Street. Wildes/Rust Farm. 1900. (Topsfield Historical Society)

Figure 42. 488-490 Boston Street. Wildes/Rust Farm. (Author's photograph, 1993)

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A large portion of the documentation of resources of Route One for this project stems from the author's life long residence in Topsfield and intimate knowledge of the town. Having traveled Route One probably over a thousand times its landscapes are as familiar to me as they possibly could be. For the purposes of this thesis I have surveyed the road carefully through driving and walking. To make my decisions concerning the significance of the road I have combined first-hand observation of the road's seasonally changing landscapes with photographs of specific features and view sheds and videotaped the entire corridor. In addition to gathering and recording this 'visual' information, I have based my conclusions on historical research of the road, older photographs and modern interviews of Topsfield residents from 1993 to 1994.

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Organizational Resources

Center for Rural Massachusetts
109 Hills North
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

The center is a service organization, which works on projects and studies, primarily within the Massachusetts, but also elsewhere in the Northeast. The aim has been to undertake innovative land use planning for rural communities in order to protect their character without stifling development.

Department of Environmental Management
Division of Resource Conservation
100 Cambridge Street Room 1404
Boston, MA 02202

The organization manages state parks, several of which have notable historical landscapes, provides technical assistance related to historic landscape preservation

Department of Public Works
Open Space Program
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

Started in 1986 by DOT intended to purchase land for preservation, restoration, or enhancement of scenic ways adjacent to public lands (such as highways). This unique program made preservation of view sheds part of DOT's policy. Nonprofit organization and state environmental agencies helped acquire non-adjacent land, often by establishing land trusts. However, there are no funds currently available for this program.

Essex County Greenbelt Association
Edward O. Becker
Jim MacDougall
82 Eastern Avenue
Essex, MA 01929

Greenbelt preserves open space in Essex County that has ecological, agricultural or scenic significance. They are a good source of information on important habitats and endangered species and are supportive of any open space and land conservation projects.

Historic Massachusetts, Inc.
Old City Hall
45 School Street
Boston, MA 02108

A coalition of Federal, State, and local organizations, Historic Massachusetts Inc. is involved in historic preservation activities in Massachusetts. Its annual conference often has sessions devoted to historic landscape preservation, with material applicable to other States and regions of the country.

Massachusetts Audubon Society
Tim Storrow, Land Protection Officer
5 South Great Road
Lincoln, MA 01773

Audubon's mission is to conserve wildlife and engage in public education and advocacy on environmental issues.

Massachusetts Highway Department
Bureau of Transportation, Planning and Development

Mass DOT is the liaison to the Federal Scenic Byway Program.

Massachusetts Historical Commission

Source of information concerning cultural and historic properties and structures nominated to state and national register.

Massachusetts Politicians:
Robert C. Buell, State Senator
Rm 321 State House
Boston, MA 02133

Forrester A. Clark, Jr., State Representative
Rm 167 State House
Boston, MA 02133

Edward M. Kennedy, U.S. Senator
Rm 2400, Federal Bldg.
Boston, MA 02203

John F. Kerry, U.S. Senator
10 Park Plaza, 3220 Transportation Bldg.
Boston, MA 02116

Peter Torkildsen, Congressman
70 Washington St.
Salem, MA 01970

William F. Weld, Governor
Room 360, State House
Boston, MA 02133

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Created *Metroplan 2000: The Regional Development Plan for Metropolitan Boston..*

National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington is creating a Corridor Management Guidebook.
Northeast Regional Office

Technical support.

Scenic America

Scenic America is under contract with Federal Highway Administration and is a source for existing local and state byway programs and projects.

Topsfield Conservation Commission
Provided aerial maps of Topsfield and lists of what they consider to be important land along Route One.

Topsfield Town Offices
Provided assessors maps, cadastral maps and other information relating land along Route One.

Trust for Public Land
New England Regional Office
67 Battery March
Boston, MA 02110-3306

National land protection organization. Programs include Community Partnership, Cultural Landscapes, New England Cityscapes, Working Landscapes, Land Protection Education.

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